"WHEN YOU WANT TO GIVE UP, YOU WANT TO GIVE IN": MENTORING PERCEPTIONS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN DOCTORAL STUDENTS AT A PREDOMINATELY WHITE INSTITUTION

A Dissertation

by

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ABSTRACT

Mentoring in graduate education is considered an important and essential part of graduate education. The journey to the doctorate for African American students, especially for African American women, comes with many hurdles and obstacles. Mentorship for these students has become a common topic when discussing faculty-student relationships.

This qualitative study was designed to understand the mentoring experiences of African American women human resource development (HRD) doctoral students and how they make meaning of their mentoring experiences with at a predominantly White institution (PWI). The research questions to guide this study were: (1) what are the perceptions of faculty mentoring for African American female doctoral students in this HRD program and (2) what are the experiences of faculty mentoring for African American female doctoral students in this HRD program.

The selection of participants for this qualitative study included six African American women enrolled in an HRD program at a PWI. Purposeful sampling was used to generate information and rich data. In this study, each of the six participants was interviewed individually with an interview guide consisting of semi-structured interview questions.

To successfully explore the mentoring experiences of African American female students enrolled in a HRD doctoral program at a PWI, key findings from this study were reported from a qualitative study involving six African American female doctoral

students enrolled in an HRD program at a PWI. Emerging themes from the study were identified as how they got to where they are; the perceptions, expectations, and actual experiences between the women and faculty. To reinforce and inform the need for mentoring, the participants provided an insight on their experiences as an African American female doctoral student in an HRD program at a PWI. In addition to a general discussion of the mentoring relationships, I focused primarily on the African American female doctoral students perceptions, expectations and experiences regarding their mentoring relationships with faculty. The findings from this study included support from family, friends and some faculty members, feelings of isolation, disconnected from the program, overwhelmed and no guidance. Other findings included only select few (students) receive mentoring, faculty don't expect much from African American women students and yearning for an African American female faculty mentor.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Luther and Sandra Fowler, without their unfailing love, prayers and support; I wouldn't have been able to complete this journey.

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"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" Philippians 4:13

"Begin the journey with the end in mind" *by Stephen Covey*

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NOMENCLATURE

CEO	Chief Executive Officer
HRD	Human Resource Development
IRB	Institutional Review Board
MFMM	Multicultural Feminist Mentoring Model
MBA	Master of Business Administration
Ph.D.	Doctor of Philosophy
PWI(s)	Predominantly White Institution(s)

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

An increasing number of students are pursing graduate education, especially at the doctoral level (Weisbuch, 2004). According to the U.S. Department of Education (2011), in 2009 alone, universities in the United States awarded over 67,000 doctoral degrees. However, only 6.5% of those degrees were awarded to people of African descent[1]. An important nuance to these statistics, however, as detailed in Appendix A, is that though the number of African American doctoral degree recipients is small relative to the number of degrees conferred overall, African American *women* actually receive a larger percentage of these doctoral degrees. Still, significant disparities remain in terms of the percentages of doctoral degrees conferred to both African American men and women given that their share of the U.S. population overall approaches nearly 12% U.S. Department of Education, 2011).

Background of the Study

When it comes to the situation of African American women earning doctoral degrees, there is more positive news. That is, in spite of their disproportionate representation among doctoral degree recipients overall, and in addition to receiving a higher percentage of the doctoral degrees as compared to African American men, Black women also earn high marks when it comes to the higher *rate* at which they attain doctoral degrees (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011).

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[1] The terms "people of African descent," "African American," and "Black" are used

Given the relatively good news about the pursuit and attainment of doctoral degrees by African American women, one may assume that those numbers would translate to an increased presence, also, in research and scholarship on African American degree attainment. Providing one explanation for why these disparities in degree attainment versus research presence persist, Moses (1989) asserted that African American women hold a unique membership in at *least* two historically marginalized groups (i.e. gender and race). Further, Zamani (2003) noted that African American women routinely become invisible in colleges and universities because of their membership in these marginalized groups. As a result, Zamani argued, "Given the complex intersection of race and gender, more attention should be paid to the educational, social, and political positions of African American women in postsecondary education" (2003, p. 5). Thus, scholars in the field have called for an increased focus on the situation of African American female doctoral students and the ways we can better understand the challenges they face in order to better meet their needs.

Statement of the Problem

The significance of this issue concerning faculty to student mentoring relationships is highlighted by the disparity in doctoral degree attainment by African American women generally, particularly in light of the lack of empirical research linking African American female doctoral students' experiences in predominantly White institutions (PWI's) with faculty mentoring (Blackwell, 1983; Moses, 1989; Bowen & Rudenstine, 1992; Zamani, 2003;Campbell, 2007). According to Hezlett and Gibson (2005) there is a growing body of literature that supports the belief that mentoring has

significant value to both individuals and the organization, but there is a gap in the literature that focus on research and practice of mentoring that are relevant to HRD students. According to Patton and Harper (2003) "Mentoring has been considered one of the salient factors in academic and career success. African American women in graduate schools often find it difficult to locate suitable mentors with whom to build such connections" (p. 67). As a result, we know very little about how mentoring might support African American female doctoral student success in human resource development (HRD) as it relates to the role faculty play in mentoring African American female HRD doctoral students at PWI's. This issue will only become more pressing as the field of HRD grows and diversity increases throughout the United States. Anecdotal evidence suggests there is a stable, if not increasing number, of African American women entering graduate programs in the U.S. (U.S. Department of Education, 2003). According to Swanson and Holton III (2009), HRD is about human beings functioning in a productive system (p. 4). Their definition of HRD states that, "HRD is a process of developing and unleashing expertise for the purpose of improving individual, team, work process, and organizational system performance" (p. 4).

Mentoring relationships are vital to the facilitation of successful experiences for African American women and are necessary in order for them to break the glass ceiling (Guido-DiBrito & Batchelor, 1988; Locke, 1997). There seems to be a shared belief in academia concerning the role of mentoring as a fundamentally informal process in which mentors and mentees come together freely (Blake, 1990; Bova, 2000, Crawford & Smith, 2005; Campbell, 2007). According to Wasbum (2005), successful mentoring

relationships are seen as a combination of common goals, individual personalities, and a healthy dose of luck. African American women in graduate school often find it difficult to navigate the pipeline in higher education and find suitable mentors with whom to build connections. "Mentoring is particularly important on the graduate level, because emerging scholars and practitioners who intend to excel in their respective professions have the opportunity to make connections and learn how to successfully maneuver within their areas of specialization" (Patton & Harper, 2003, p. 67).

While the situation of African American female doctoral students and their experiences with mentoring have been inadequately explored in extant research, the situation is even more concerning in the field of HRD specifically. Research on mentoring in HRD has addressed such issues as understanding mentoring as it relates to employee development (D'Abate, Eddy, & Tannenbaum, 2003), CEO's perspectives on mentoring relationships and career development (Rosser, 2005), formal mentoring in organizations (Egan, 2005; Hegstad, 1999; Hegstad & Wentling, 2004), mentoring as a human resource development tool and the lessons protégés learn from their mentors (Hezlett, 2005; Hezlett & Gibson, 2005) and relationship development and mentoring process (Noe, Greenberger, & Wang, 2002).

Further, research in this field has also explored the experiences of African American women mangers in organizations and their career advancement (Combs, 2003) and gender differences in mentoring (Young, Cady, & Foxon (2006). Unfortunately, very little research explores the intersection of African American female doctoral students with faculty mentoring. The lack of literature on African American female

HRD doctoral students perceptions and experiences of their mentoring relationships with HRD faculty underscores the critical importance of this study.

Many colleges and universities rely on mentoring relationships to occur informally or within the advising relationship, which can leave some students without a mentor. Establishing a formal mentoring program for African American female doctoral students can provide needed support for graduate students. However, more research needs to be conducted to better understand African American women, their aspirations, obstacles, and the significance of mentors (Allen, Jacobson, & Lomotey, 1995).

Purpose of the Study

In an effort to better understand the mentoring experiences of African American female HRD doctoral students and how they make meaning of their mentoring experiences with faculty at a PWI, the position of this research was to set mentoring as the central focus of African American women doctoral students. Its purpose was to examine the experiences of African American women doctoral students in a United States HRD graduate program—with particular emphasis on their mentoring relationships. The study further solicits the insights of African American female doctoral students regarding the most important characteristics of the mentoring relationships with faculty in HRD graduate programs.

Research Questions

Given the purpose of this study to examine the perceptions and experiences of African American women doctoral students in a select HRD graduate program, with an emphasis on understanding their experiences and perceptions of mentoring relationships

with faculty, the following research questions guided this study:

Research Question 1: What are the perceptions of faculty mentoring for African American female doctoral students in this HRD program?

Research Question 2: What are the experiences of faculty mentoring for African American female doctoral students in this HRD program?

Significance

One promising area of research to address the experiences of African American female graduate students comes from research on mentoring. In the education field, studies have shown mentoring to be a critical factor in doctoral student success generally (Faison, 1996; Patton & Harper, 2003; Williams-Nickelson, 2009), in particular for African American women (Grant et al., 1993; Hall & Sandler, 1983; Welch, 1990). Further, effective mentoring aids in the completing of degrees, receipt of funding for research, and publication of scholarly research, all which are critical for academic career growth (Grant & Ward, 1992). Nonetheless, research insufficiently addresses the intersection of these two disparate yet overlapping areas of mentoring and the experiences of Black female graduate students. On one hand, some attention has been paid to Black female graduate students regarding their experiences navigating graduate school generally and the completion of their program (Nettles, 1990; Holland, 1993; Fasion, 1996; Davidson & Foster-Johnson, 2001; Zamani, 2003; Felder, 2010). However, in general, research on mentoring has explored such issues as the role of mentoring for tenure track African American female faculty (Tillman, 2001), Black female faculty experiences in predominantly white institutions (Alfred, 2001; Butner,

Burley, & Marbley, 2000; Harley, 2008), and the influence of religion and spirituality on mentoring relationships (Watt, 2003). By focusing on African American female doctoral students, this study should give light into the perceptions and expectations of the mentoring relationships between faculty and students.

As an African American female doctoral student enrolled in an HRD program that received limited or no mentoring from faculty members in my program, mentoring is extremely important in the lives of African American women. The support, visibility, competence and networking provided from the mentor provide psychosocial (social support) functions. This study carefully looked for a deep understanding of the meaning and affect of mentoring relationships with faculty.

Operational Definitions

The following terms are used throughout the research study and working definitions are provided for a common reference point:

Black or African American. A person having origins in any Black racial groups of Africa. (U.S. Census bureau, 2000).

Black Feminist Thought. Theoretical framework used to describe the lived experiences of African American women through their stories. According to Collins, "Black feminist thought may be recorded by others, but it is produced by Black women. It also assumes that Black women possess a unique standpoint, or perspective of, their own experiences and that there will be certain commonalities of perception shared by Black women as a group" (Collins, 1986, p. 16)

Human Resource Development (HRD). Human Resource Development "is a

process of developing and unleashing expertise for the purpose of improving individual, team, work process, and organizational system performance" (Swanson & Holton III, 2009, p. 4).

Mentee and Protégé. Used in this study to refer to someone who receives help or support from an individual that has experience or influences his or her career.

Mentor. A mentor maybe defined as a role model or a high-ranking individual. A mentor may also be described as someone in a leadership or senior position that has experience and power in an organization; that gives instrumental help and guidance to support someone's career.

Mentoring. A unique relationship between an experienced individual that assists another individual in developing skills and knowledge for personal and professional growth (Kram, 1985, Jacobi, 1991; Levinson, Darrow, Levinson, Klien, & McKee, 1978)

Multicultural. Includes elements of diversity present within the relationship and environment, including but not limited to race, gender, class, sexual orientation, and age (Benishek, Bieschke, Park & Slattery, 2004).

Multicultural Feminist Mentoring Model (MFMM). Emphasizes differences between the mentor and the mentee as it relates to cultural identity, power and privilege.

Social Capital. Social capital facilitates the achievement of various actions and goals and can be found in support systems (Roberts & Plakhotnik, 2009, p.43

White. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the

Middle East or North Africa.

Predominately White Institution (PWI). A college or university whose majority student population is Caucasian (European origin).

Summary

This study's purpose was to gain a better understanding of faculty to student mentoring relationships and to gain insight into the perceptions and expectations of African American women doctoral students enrolled in an HRD program at a PWI who engage in mentoring relationships with faculty.

The intent of this study was also to add to the body of literature and knowledge addressing mentoring and African American women doctoral students. Although, the field of HRD is growing and the number of African American women enrolling in HRD programs are increasing, there is still much work to do concerning the mentoring and support African American women enrolled in these HRD doctoral programs received. Findings from this study should: (a) inform; and (b) increase awareness within HRD educational departments concerning mentoring for African American female doctoral students. I focused primarily on the African American female doctoral students perceptions, expectations and experiences regarding their mentoring relationships with faculty. The findings from this study included support from family, friends and some faculty members, feelings of isolation, disconnected from the program, overwhelmed and no guidance. Other findings included only select (students) few receive mentoring, faculty don't expect much from African American women students, and yearning for an African American female faculty mentor.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section of Chapter II, I will offer a review of the literature that supports the need to investigate mentoring and the connection to the academic success of African American women. I present an overview of African American faculty and students in academia and also highlight how mentoring was a vital role in the success of these individuals. In this section, I describe the characteristics of a mentor and an advisor along with the types of mentoring relationships.

Many African American doctoral students' journey towards completion of their doctorate degree comes with many hurdles and obstacles. The experience of mentorship for these African American students has become a common topic when discussing faculty-student relationship (Davison & Johnson, 2001; Taylor& Antony, 2000). According to Davidson and Johnson (2001) faculty mentoring involves "activities and interactions that may be related to work, skill, acquisition, and social or emotional aspects of the mentor or the protégé" (p. 551). To ensure completion of a doctoral degree for African American students, the nature of faculty mentorship is considered one of the strongest factors (Willie et al., 1991).

While the conversation about the benefit and value of mentoring has begun across campuses, there is no clear understanding of the degree to which the idea is being executed on campuses. Mentoring relationships need to be examined and explored across campuses. Kram (1983) and Ragins and Kram (2007) indicated a growing number

of researchers have studied the dynamics of developmental relationships within industrial and academic organizations. However, the vast majority of available mentoring studies have been done in business or industrial settings.

Mentoring is considered to be important to graduate education, it happens more often in business settings rather than academic settings (Wright & Wright, 1987). Mentoring in organizations can range in programs such as career development and management training to include coaching, exposure, early socialization, career advancement, leadership development and sponsorship (Burke, McKeen, & McKenna 1993; Roche, 1979; Day, 2001). Mentoring exists everywhere but finding information on its connection with HRD can prove challenging. Few studies have been conducted that explored the mentoring relationships for African American women doctoral students or the success of the relationships from the student's perspective. These mentoring relationships, formal and informal, may create conditions for success in graduate school for African American students.

In many cases, these relationships help to integrate a student into the culture of the department and help to develop the necessary professional characteristics needed in order to become a successful student. Although the definition of mentoring has changed over the years, mentoring is still "a developmental relationship that is embedded within the career context" (Ragins & Kram, 2007, p. 5). Frierson (1997) stated, "Mentoring is considered so important in graduate education, not only is it an essential part of graduate education, it may be the heart of graduate education" (p. 2).

Mentoring for African American Faculty in Higher Education

The number of African American faculty on the campuses of PWI's is vastly underrepresented. Scholars have suggested that mentoring used as an effective strategy to recruit and retain students, especially African American female doctoral students and faculty (Redmond, 1990; Reid and Wilson, 1993). As an advocate for African American women rights, Harley (2008) spoke about how Black women are portrayed as maids of the academe. This metaphor was used to describe the mistreatment and abuses African American women faculty at PWIs suffer. Harley notes that the constant pressure these women experience affects their personal and professional lives. However, these women have only been able to persevere through these challenges because of their high resilience (Harley, 2008). The literature suggests that organizations create systematic systems such as mentoring programs for new faculty but it does not suggest how these mentoring programs or relationships will decrease the stressors that these women face in the academy.

Mentoring for African American Students in Higher Education

In an examination of African American students at predominantly White and predominately Black universities, Blackwell (1983) found that many of the students at the Black universities had more contacts or networks than those at White universities. As a result, he suggested more mentoring relationships should be formed between faculty and African American graduate students who were navigating through their programs. He also described the importance of mentoring and networking for Black graduate student success. Blackwell (1983) also found that if Black students were

excluded from social and educational networks and if they were not included in the network spawned by mentor-protégé relationships, their movement 'through and up' in the world of professional ranks could be impeded and perhaps, unnecessarily traumatic (p.4). The literature also suggests that African American students who receive acceptance, encouragement and understanding from faculty are most likely to have positive relationships with their professors (Irvine, 1990).

Discussing a similar point to Blackwell on the importance of faculty mentoring, O'Neil and Wrightsman (2001) expounded on the key components of a mentor's role, which they define as:

> [M]uch more than an academic advisor. The mentor's values represent idealized norms and can have considerable influence on how mentees see themselves and the profession. Mentees have various emotional responses to their mentors, including admiration, awe, fear, and idealization. Experiences with mentors can be impactful and remembered for years. The mentor's power and influence on the mentee approximates the intensity parents and children have with each other. (p. 112)

Thus, O'Neal and Wrightsman reveal the significant role mentoring plays, though they warn that the role can be either positive or negative.

Looking more closely at the issue of graduate student retention, Gardner, Keller, and Piotrowski (1996) explored the perceptions of 60 African American students who attended a predominantly White institution regarding the elements needed to enhance retention of graduate students. Factors that emerged as significant included: a) the

development of special support programs for African-American students, b) diversity training for all faculty and staff, c) hiring additional African-American faculty and staff, d) increased faculty-student interaction. Most interesting of theses findings is the importance of faculty in three of the four factors. Further, that these faculty be trained in issues of diversity as well.

Similarly, Holland (1993) also studied graduate student experiences, but focused more narrowly on the perspectives of African American doctoral students who were current students or recent graduates of a research-extensive university. From the interviews, key supportive and non-supportive factors were highlighted. Non-supportive factors included: a) limited contact between the doctoral student and their advisor, b) non-developmental relationships with faculty, c) faculty or advisor was not involved in nurturing or grooming the doctoral student. Supportive factors included a) flexible and supportive advisors, b) educational research opportunities, c) academic and career mentoring. Again, significant in Holland's findings in Appendix C list the importance of faculty and faculty mentoring specifically in students' perceptions of their experiences.

Continuing this theme of graduate students' perspectives on mentoring, Rose (2003; 2005) examined graduate students' definition of mentoring or the "ideal mentor" from the perspective of a protégé. Interestingly, there was a high degree of agreement regarding the essential functions an ideal faculty mentor would exemplify. Overall, the scale illustrates the two most important things that mentors can do for graduate students are to communicate clearly and effectively, and to provide honest feedback (Rose, 2003)

Mentoring for African American Female Doctoral Students in Higher Education

The experiences of African American female doctoral students vary. Some African American women, who were students at a variety of institutions, reported feeling alone, isolated, had low self-efficacy, were unable to find someone that looked like them, and were frustrated (Welch, 1996; Quinlan, 1999). In a study conducted by Schroeder and Mynatt (1993) women graduate students sometimes felt they were invisible, ignored, and rejected by male and female faculty members. Others felt those who did not look like them were not trustworthy and were unable to understand their perspectives as African American women.

Many African American women graduate students preferred African American mentors who had similar personal, professional, and scholarly interests. Or, as Welch (1996) stated, "individuals tend to identify with persons who are like themselves" (p.10). Further, female respondents in Mumford's (1996) study deemed mentoring relationships to be important for their personal and educational growth. However, some study participants expressed concern about the lack of African American faculty. The women in Mumford's study went beyond their disciplines to seek out mentors from other networks, including parents, church members, civic and organizational professionals, and sorority members.

Characteristics of a Mentor

Mentors are an important part of a support system. Mentoring relationships help neutralize psychological conflicts such as cultural and social differences as well as lack of support from other places. According to Roberts and Plakhotnik (2009), the support

systems in higher education include the academic program, university, the higher education environment and social networks (p. 43). These support systems help build the social capital in higher education. For Black women in particular, a good mentor is critical to helping navigate challenges regarding prejudices and stereotypical images, racism, sexism, and stresses of being bicultural (e.g., Bell, 1990; Blake, 1999).

Discussing the challenges Black women face, Blake (1990) noted that some critics argue that Black women are actually in a privileged, protected position because of their membership in two traditionally marginalized groups (based on their gender and racial identifications). However, Blake (1990) also recognized the perspective of others who argued that Black women are "doubly disadvantaged" because of these factors (p. 85).

Another stressor Black women face is the need to invest in alliance building with the power elite. Thomas (1990) defined mentoring as the relationship between juniors and seniors (in terms of age or experience) that exists primarily to support the personal (or psychosocial) and career development of the junior person. However, much of the literature does not recognize that the need to form a relationship with those who are classified as the dominant group may have a negative impact on one's success.

A mentor is someone that provides support and guidance throughout the career of an individual. Kram (1983) indicated that, "the mentor relationship has great potential to facilitate career advancement and psychosocial development in both early and middle adulthood providing a vehicle for accomplishing these primary developmental tasks" (p. 608). These mentoring relationships are limited and sometimes can become destructive.

She creates a list of phases that can be used to enhance career development and psychosocial development of a mentoring relationship. Those phases are as followed: a) initiation phase- during the start of the relationship, period of six months to a year, b) cultivation phase- the time when the range of functions provided expands to a maximum, period of two to five years, c) separation phase-the time when established nature of the relationship is substantially altered by structural changes in the organizational context or by psychological changes between both individuals, period of six months to two years, and, d) redefinition phase- the relationship evolves a new form that is significantly different from the past relationship or the relationship ends, an indefinite period.

Kram's study had a total of 18 pairs of relationships, only one pair included female participants, junior manager and senior manger, which the senior manager left the company. This study illustrates how the relationship between the mentor and the protégée shifts through phases and the benefits and struggles that can arise during the phase changes. Each phase includes an estimate timeframe for each relationship to develop.

The role of the mentorships can provide visibility and exposure by demonstrating the protégés competence and special talents. Egan and Rosser (2004) states that "mentors who are learning goal oriented may be motivated to provide more counseling, coaching, and teaching to their protégés, who in turn may be motivated to receive information or perspectives from their mentors" (p.4). These mentoring relationships have a positive affect on the protégé, in ways such as increased career enhancing benefits from their

mentoring relationships. It can also serve the role of a coach or counselor concerning work and non-work issues.

These psychosocial mentoring functions, as Simon, Roff and Perry (2008) suggested, influences the protégés on a personal level such as being friendly, role modeling, acceptance and confirmation (p. 10). Schlossberg (1989) lists topics that are important to women: a) attention- the feeling that one commands interest or notice of another person, b) importance- the belief someone else cares about what we want, think, and do, and that we are the object of that person's concern, e.g. a mentor who asks you for feedback on important issues, c) dependence- the perception that someone else depends on us, e.g. protégés given tasks that make a difference, d) ego-extension- the belief that others will be proud of our accomplishments, disappointed with our failures, e.g. mentor who makes others in leaders positions aware of our accomplishments, and e) appreciation- a feeling that others are thankful for what we are and what we do, e.g. organization recognition for our work.

The mentoring relationships allow the mentor to provide advice that will help in the advancement of these women's career. The mentor has the chance to evaluate the protégé and help formulate and judge the mentee or the protégé on their ability to handle difficult tasks. The mentor also can provide instructions or support to take risks that are necessary for the advancement of their career. The guidance and the inspiration that these women receive from their mentors create an easier path into a successful career path or up the career ladder.

Characteristics of an Advisor

The relationships that are fostered between faculty and students are key to student success. According to Holba (2012) shifting the metaphor from advising to mentoring, we can discover we can better help our students develop the skills they need to be successful in their public and private domains (p. 1). According to (Schlosser & Gelso, 2001) the support from an advisor is related to completion of doctoral requirements, which can be noted as career mentoring. High levels of interaction (Long, 1987) frequent informal interactions, and connections with various faculty members, (Hartnett, 1976; Weiss, 1981; & Gerholm, 1990) treating the student as a junior colleague (Girves & Wemmerus, 1988) and providing reviews of progress on a regular basis (Heiss, 1970) are qualities or characteristics of a good advisor.

According to Schlosser and Gelso (2001) one can be an advisor without being a mentor and certainly one can be a mentor without being that person's advisor (p.158). Furthermore, an advisor has the responsibility for helping guide the students or mentees/advisees through the education program.

Types of Mentoring Relationships

In this section I describe the different types of mentoring relationships and their impact on lives of African American women**.** These sections highlight the influences of race and gender along side the formal and informal mentoring relationships.

Gender and Race

The impact of race and gender in mentoring relationships vary according to the influence these mentoring relationships have upon the women but the literature remains

unclear and vague concerning the role of gender in the mentoring relationships. Research completed by Tillman (2001) suggest Black professional women prefer Black women mentors but there are fewer women that hold senior level or elite positions in male dominated organizations. Leck, Oser, & Riding (2009) suggest, that "women prefer female mentors instead of male mentors, but are sometimes reluctant to enter into a mentoring relationship due to a shortage of female mentors" (p. 212). "These gender imbalances necessitate cross-gender mentoring in order to provide women with mentors" (Egan & Rosser, 2004, p. 227). In a study conducted by Riley and Wrench (1985) found that women who had mentors reported an increase in job satisfaction and success than those who did not have access to a mentor. In a study conducted by Patton and Harper (2003) on African American female students in post baccalaureate degree programs at a predominantly white research university, "participants felt that having an African American female mentor would be a rich and unique experience" (p. 71). The characteristics of these relationships included mothering and providing emotional support and were characterized as being extremely valuable.

Race is a salient factor in the development of African American women. Noe (1988) identified six potential barriers in cross-gender relationships: lack of access to information, tokenism, stereotypes, socialization practices, norms regarding cross-gender relationships, and reliance on ineffective power bases. Simon, Roff and Perry (2008) suggest that having a complementary style means that both parties use the same approach to address race, whether denial and suppression or direct engagement (p. 12). These relationships provide personal assistance when dealing with race and gender bias.

These mentoring relationships provide a sense of belonging, by increasing self-efficacy and self-esteem, which allows for those these protégés to overcome the feeling that you may be one of the few in the organization. According to Egan (1994), women in higher education who had at least one mentor—usually a male mentor have been successful.

The support from other Black women creates a bond or "sisterhood" that over time becomes a lasting friendship or relationship. The social support that these protégés will receive will provide guidance that will help shape their career while reducing stress or the stressors that contribute to stress. There are four types of social support categories that House (1981) proposed help shape Black women, 1) Emotional support includes self-esteem, affect, trust, concern and listening, 2) Appraisal support involves affirmation, feedback, and social comparison, 3) Informational support involves advice, suggestion, directives and information and finally, 4) Instrumental support encompasses aid-in-kind, money, labor, time and modifying environment. Jacobi (1991) stated that there are four functions of social support that are connected to the three major components of mentoring. Emotional and appraisal social support correspond with the emotional support function of mentoring while instrumental and informational social support correspond with direct assistance for professional development.

Other ways that protégés can benefit from mentoring relationships is through activities that can be utilized as a tool for the protégé. Types of activities could include bonding activities that will create comradeship and the creation of shared feelings. "These ongoing activities and communication designed to assist the protégé in meeting the requirements for promotion" (Tillman, 2001, p.322). "Fostering effective mentoring

relationships in organizations is a complex process demanding flexibility and an understanding of human interrelations (Bova, 2000, p. 5). The dismal representation of African American faculty and staff at predominantly white institutions yields an extremely limited pool of same-race mentors for African American female graduate students" (p. 77). More research needs to be conducted to better understand the various needs of African American female graduate students.

Formal and Informal Mentoring

Formal and informal mentoring relationships have been discussed as important themes throughout the literature. Formal mentoring is initiated through an organizational program that assigns mentors and protégés and facilitates and supports developmental relationships within the assigned dyads for a specific period of time (Ragins & Kram, 2007, p. 250). Formal mentoring programs are developed through the assistance of the organization. These formal mentoring programs can be beneficial to the mentor and protégé as well as the organization if guidelines are followed when developing the program (Gerstien, 1985, p.156). These programs should be designed according to the needs of the protégé. Murry (1991) defined a formal mentoring program as a structure and series of processes designed to create effective mentoring relationships and evaluate the results for the protégé. When mentors enter formal mentoring relationships, they bring with them "their intentions, assumptions of role, and understanding of the program's purpose based on their own personal mentoring experiences and life history" (Ragins & Kram, 2007, p. 620). Some of the characteristics that may develop during the

beginnings of a formal mentoring relationship include "awkwardness, anxiety, skepticism, and tentativeness" (p. 620).

Informal mentoring has been categorized as self-selection, which can be initiated in the initiation phase. According to Kalbfleish (2000) during the initiation phase individuals form relationships with partners to whom they are attracted and with whom they feel a sense of connection. These relationships are started either by the protégé seeking a mentor whose experiences he/or she can benefit from, or the mentor may engage in a professional relationship with the protégé which a mentor-protégé relationship forms. In some cases, formal mentoring relationships develop from informal relationships. According to Ragins and Kram (2007) some of the characteristics that may develop during the beginning stages of the relationship include excitement, fantasies, infatuation and positive anticipation.

As one moves through their doctoral program, creating relationships with faculty is very important. During a doctoral student's education experience, the advisor or faculty member is often one of the most influential persons with whom they will come in contact. Allen, Jacobson and Lomotey (1995) indicated that mentoring is important in graduate education because of its many benefits including career advancement, job satisfaction, and increased pay.

The use of a mentor can help adult learners transition from graduate student to faculty. During a doctoral student's education experience, the advisor is often one of the most influential persons that they will come in contact with. Johnsrud (1993) indicated

that faculty to student mentoring relationships take shape while the student is in graduate school and before he or she takes a junior faculty position.

Current University Formal Mentoring Programs

There are a few colleges and universities who offer graduate mentoring programs that have been successful throughout their tenure. Below I have outlined three colleges and universities that have been successful implementing their mentoring programs.

The Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program

The Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program offers mentoring program, part of the TRIO program that focuses on the academic success in graduate school. The McNair Scholars Program is a:

> Federal TRIO program funded at 200 institutions across the United States and Puerto Rico by the U.S. Department of Education. It is designed to prepare undergraduate students for doctoral studies through involvement in research and other scholarly activities. McNair participants are either first-generation college students with financial need, or members of a group that is traditionally underrepresented in graduate education and have demonstrated strong academic potential. The goal of the McNair Scholars Program is to increase graduate degree awards for students from underrepresented segments of society. (http://mcnairscholars.com/about/).

The program was named after the late Ronald M. McNair, an African American Astronaut who was killed when the U.S. Challenger space shuttle exploded. The program encourages low-income and first-generation college students as well as students

from historically underrepresented ethnic group the opportunity to enroll in Ph.D. programs and purse their academic goals.

The program allows institutions that are part of this TRIO to work closely with undergraduate students and encourage them to enroll in their graduate programs. The program also provides the students with faculty mentors or students who work closely with them and track their progress throughout their doctoral program. Program participators are offered financial assistance, tutoring, academic counseling, opportunities for research and scholarly activities, and summer internships and other academic programs and exposure to various cultural events that may not have been offered to disadvantaged students. In 2012 there were over 150 schools participating in the Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program. During that year, over 4,000 students participated in the program. Many of the students have credited the McNair program for their success. For instance, a student stated that, "McNair program really helped me…I learned what it takes to make it in grad school by participating in research, giving presentations and writing about research results"(mcnairscholars.com).

A student who earned her master's and doctorate at UC Santa Barbara indicated that as a female minority she learned how to advocate for herself. She was very fortunate for the help that she received in graduate school. Another student who graduated with his doctorate in pharmaceutical sciences stated that,

> "looking back, I realize that their mentorship was exceptional. They really care about you, which is rare. People care but not like Cal State Fullerton mentors.

I'm a first-generation U.S. college student, and they really helped prepare me for graduate school like no one else."

The mentoring and motivation the McNair program offered to these students helped to define their academic career. The program imitated a sense of belonging and support that their academic family would be there to support these students as they navigated the academic pipeline.

The Grad Mentoring Program

The Grad Mentoring program at the University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign created a mentoring program geared towards all graduate students who are Predoctoral Institute Fellows and traditionally underrepresented students who have passed their preliminary exams. The purpose of their Grad Mentoring program is to promote academic success and career outcomes for traditionally underrepresented racial and ethnic minority graduate students and fellows. Students are sent an invitation annually during the fall semester to join the network. Once invitations are sent out, students are required to attend an orientation, during which they sign up to be a part of the mentoring network. Afterwards, they are matched with a faculty member.

The matching of the mentee with a mentor varies. For instance, a graduate student in computer science maybe paired up with a faculty member in engineering or a graduate student in social science may be paired up with a faculty member in computer science. The purpose of these pairs according to their website is to "contribute depth and breadth of knowledge and experience that supports the broader negotiations of graduate students status at the University of Illinois campus" ("Graduate Mentoring at Illinois",

2013, para.7). In order to help build the relationships between the mentors and students, faculty members are encouraged to attend various receptions and campus activities.

This particular program gives the student the option of joining the network and paired up with a faculty member who is excited about helping the students reach their goal. However, this program does not match students with a faculty member in their major or department but it does allow them the opportunity to explore the diversity the campus has to offer.

Claremont Graduate University Minority Mentoring Program

Claremont Graduate University offers a minority-mentoring program that was developed in 1994, offered during the students first year of graduate enrollment. Mentees are assigned to the students during the beginning of the fall semester based on the amount of mentors (students) that is signed up. The program was established to help students navigate the ins and outs of the first year of graduate school. The program also offers a student conference and workshops that cover a variety of topics such as "presentation skills for academic conferences and ways to overcome pitfalls during their first year" ("Minority Mentor Program", 2013). The student conference is a student led conference that provides an environment for students from all disciplines the opportunity to present their research. The program also partners with various student organizations across Claremont campus to co-sponsor the events that are relevant to underrepresented students. These co-sponsored events offer a diverse amount of support and resources that are available at Claremont.

The students involved in the program received various motivation techniques and skills to stay motivated while enrolled in graduate school. They also participated in research groups that focused on the question of why they decided to enroll in graduate school and their academic plans in graduate school. The mentoring sessions included organizational skills, networking, time management, resources available on campus and life balancing skills.

Mentoring and Human Resource Development

It is also necessary to understand HRD and the connection that mentoring relationships have with HRD. HRD has been defined according McLagan's (1989) definition of HRD as "the integrated use of training and development, career development and organization development to improve individual and organizational effectiveness" (p. 7). According to Gilley, Eggland, and Gilley (2002), "HRD is about the development of people within organizations" (p.4). The authors also emphasize that development cannot occur unless individuals have the opportunity to participate in activities that are designed to introduce new knowledge (Gilley et al., 2002).

Kram (1983) identified two types of assistance mentors can provide their protégés (mentees) in order to directly aid their career growth. The career functions included challenging assignments, coaching, exposure, protection and sponsorship. She also identified psychosocial functions such as acceptance and confirmation, counseling, friendship, and role modeling. All of these functions according to Kram are important to the success of the mentoring relationship.

HRD and mentoring has been examined through the lens of organizational development, training and development, and career development (McLagan 1989). Examining the relationship from an organizational standpoint, mentoring can be used to improve employee effectiveness (Hegstead, 2002). For training and development purposes, Werner and DeSimone (2006) suggest that mentoring can provide key competencies towards enhancing employee's ability to perform their job duties. With regard to career development, "mentoring has been linked to both potential benefits for organizations and individuals" (Werner & DeSimone, 2006, p. 424).

As noted earlier, HRD and mentoring has been examined through the lens of organizational development, training and development, and career development. There has been some attention given to the mentoring outcomes at the organizational level (improved motivation, job performance and retention), organizational culture (changing or strengthening culture) and improving overall communication (Wilson & Elman, Wanberg et al., 2003). For training development purposes, research has focused on the importance of learning in the mentoring relationships. Research conducted by Singh, Bains, and Vinnicombe (2002) concerning theory-building efforts emphasize that learning is an important understanding the mentoring relationship. Eby and Allen (2004) indicated that protégé learning has been connected positively with receiving support from the mentor. Research on career development highlight the importance of mentoring as it relates to career outcomes, such as career satisfaction, compensation and promotions and job satisfaction) (Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz, & Lima (2004).

There has also been limited research that examined the subtleties of mentoring relationships, such as the "micro" processes through which mentors and protégés (mentees) interact and the "macro" processes that highlight how the mentoring relationship evolves overtime. Others have studied the mentor-protégé reciprocity (Ensher, Thomas & Murphy, 2001) and relationship closeness (Mullen & Noe, 1999). An important aspect of this research is that protégés actively shape their relationship with mentors (Wangberg, Welsh, & Hezelett, 2003). Also, gaining a better understanding of the interpersonal processes involved in mentoring relationships will help to understand the conditions under which the mentoring relationships are satisfying and supportive.

Theoretical Frameworks

In this section I offer a review of the theoretical frameworks used to identify the phenomena of interest, the perceptions of African American female doctoral students mentoring relationships with faculty. This study drew from two distinct but interrelated theoretical frameworks; Black feminist thought, the multicultural feminist mentoring model and social theory.

Black Feminist Thought

The first was Black feminist thought (Collins, 1990; 1998; 2002). The second was the multicultural feminist mentoring model (Benishek, Bieschke, Park & Slattery, 2008) based on Fassingers work. Black feminist thought proposed that African American women have been placed in marginalized positions, particularly in academic settings, for an extended period. As Howard-Hamilton (2003) noted:

> This marginality is viewed as the "outsider within" status, in which Black women have been invited into places where the dominant group has assembled, but they remain outsiders because they are still invisible and have no voice when dialogue commences. A sense of belonging can never exist because there is no personal or cultural fit between the experiences of African American woman and the dominant group. (p. 21)

Thus, Black feminist thought provides an appropriate context for the present study, given the marginalized status Black female doctoral students experience, especially in the predominantly white settings in which HRD programs are housed.

Black feminist thought is characterized by three key themes (Collins, 2002). First, Black feminist thought centers the experiences of Black women from their own perspectives. Though research has been written about their experiences in the past, it has not always been conducted by them, put in their words, or framed within their worldview. Further, these outside conceptions of Black women's experiences have often been deeply flawed and dangerously stereotypical. Even more concerning, Collins (2002) noted, "these externally defined images have been designed to control assertive Black female behavior" (p. 469). Work embracing a Black feminist thought perspective counters these damaging, deficit-laden perspectives of Black women and encourages Black women themselves to redefine and explain their own stories as Black women. Collins's philosophy of Black feminist thought provides a richer meaning and framework for African American women whose voice has been heard from the outside. Thus, Black feminist thought purposefully grounds itself in the perspectives,

experiences, and worldviews of Black women.

The second theme within Black feminist thought is the uniqueness of every woman's story. While there may be intersections among and between Black women's experiences, each individual woman's narrative is important in its own right. Finally, the third theme in Black feminist thought is the multiple lenses and contexts from which Black women's experiences can be viewed. For example, relevant to understanding their perspective are issues of class, religion, age, and sexual orientation, among many others. Each of these lenses is important to understanding their identity and offers a different perspective from which to view their experiences. Secondly, the multicultural feminist mentoring model created by Benishek, Bieschke, Park, and Slattery (2004) based on Fassinger's work examines the benefits to the mentor and mentee. To further explore the phenomena of interest, the multicultural feminist mentoring model was used to illustrate the benefits of mentoring for the mentor and the mentee.

Multicultural Feminist Mentoring Model (MFMM)

The multicultural feminist mentoring model (MFMM) has its origins in Fassinger's feminist mentoring model. This model emphasized the idea of mentoring and the issues related to power and empowerment. Further, the model examines how the mentor recognizes the existence of power differences in the mentoring relationship and makes an effort to use their power as a way to empower the mentee and/or protégé.

Building on Fassinger's work, Benishek, Bieschke, Park, and Slattery (2004) offered the (MFMM) to address critical oversights in Fassinger's work regarding power differentials with respect to issues of cultural identity, power and privilege. Further,

(Benishek et al., 2004) assert that these differences must be "explicitly identified, explored, and valued; further, respect for existing differences is critical" (Schlosser & Foley, 2008, p. 65). This model focuses on empowering the mentee. By empowering the mentee, Heinrich (1995) states, the mentor helps facilitate the professional development of the mentee by working to foster "mutual empathy, mutual empowerment, mutual caretaking with a healthy degree of reciprocity, and authenticity marked by role flexibility" (p. 463). Thus, MFMM is particularly useful in applications where the mentor-mentee relationship crosses majority-minority relationship dynamics, for example, with respect to race/ethnicity, social class, or gender.

Appendix B illustrates the characteristics of the MFMM. In the first column, the characteristics of MFMM from the perspective of the mentor are listed. For example, the first characteristic, Rethinking of Power, is comprised of two qualities, (1) Eschewing hierarchies and sharing power and (2) Putting one's own needs secondary to those of the mentee. The middle column lists the Benefits to Mentor of that characteristic, which in this case is that the mentor gains a colleague. Finally, the last column represents the Benefits to Mentee of each characteristic of MFMM. In this case that benefit is that s/he feels competent, learns to trust, and respects self. There are six MFMM characteristics of the MFMM listed in Appendix B, with attendant benefits to mentor and mentee listed for each. The exception is the last characteristic, Commitment to Diversity, which does not have specific benefits to either mentor or mentee outlined in the MFMM.

The additional benefit to the MFMM is that many women prefer the interpersonal characteristics of mentorship such as nurturance, peace, open

communication, self-esteem building and egalitarianism (Benishek et al., 2004; Egan, 1996; Schramm, 2000). In a multicultural feminist mentoring relationship, the protégé (or mentee) is the focus of the relationship, rather than the mentor. The mentor's goal is to promote the success and welfare of the protégé, as well as to facilitate a positive and encouraging relationship with the protégé or mentee. The ideas of equity, mutuality, and empowerment are key attributes of this theoretical framework (Benishek et al., 2004). In higher education, mentoring is the forefront and essential for socialization within the organization for women and people of color in academia (Turner & Thompson, 1993). Thus this mentoring model meets the distinctive needs of underrepresented groups including African American women. Together, Black feminist thought and the Multicultural Feminist Mentoring Model (MFMM) provide a powerful foundation for this exploration of the perceptions and experiences of African American female HRD doctoral students who engage in mentoring relationships with faculty.

Social Capital

It is important to understand social capital and emotional intelligence and how they both relate to HRD and mentoring. "Social capital facilitates the achievement of various actions and goals and can be found in support systems (Roberts & Plakhotnik, 2009, p.43). According to Hezlett and Gibson (2007), "until recently have social capital and mentoring concepts been utilized together to understand workplace phenomena…and is likely to remain an important phenomena for human resource development professionals to understand and utilize" (p. 384). Lin (2001) referred to social capital as individuals investing in social ties to gain recourses and access of others

within a group or network. Bourdieu (1986) stated that one's membership in a group makes for support through the form of collectivity or "owned capital, a 'credential,' which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word" (p.51). The size of the individuals' relationship networks depends upon the amount of social capital (Bourdieu, 1986).

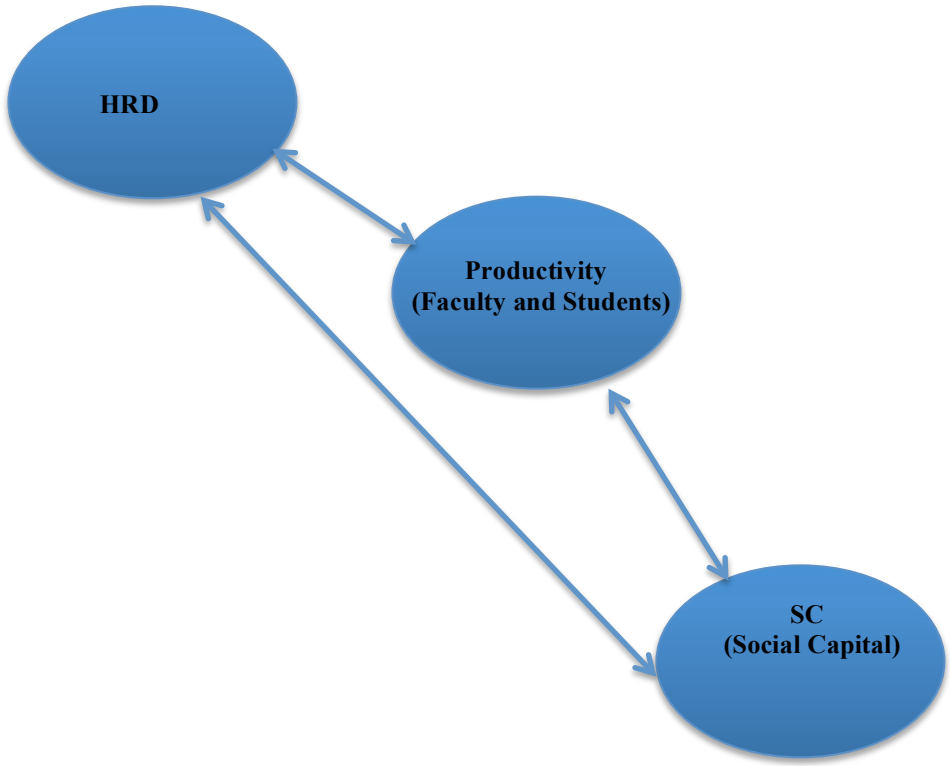
According to Yang (2004), "HRD as a field of study has been viewed as being supported by three theoretical foundations of economic, psychological and systems theory" (p. 142). Brooks and Naufkho (2006) noted that

> The economic aspect of HRD is in support of organizational productivity, while the psychological foundation supports the importance of considering the emotional needs of people in organizations as importance of considering the emotional needs of people in organizations as potential determinants of performance. Systems theory supports the need to view organizations from a holistic perspective and to acknowledge the interconnectedness of organizational performance, economic gain, social networks and social networks an social needs of people within organizations (p. 119).

For the purpose of this study, Figure 1 below illustrates the interconnectedness of the processes and the people within an organization system as it relates to HRD, productivity and social capital.

Figure 1

The Relationship between HRD, SC and Productivity



Summary

My goal for Chapter II were to give an in-depth overview of the mentoring literature that exits and the theoretical frameworks that support success of African American women and the various types of interactions that occur in mentoring relationships. A thorough understanding and discussion of the history of mentoring relationships in lives of African Americans provided a greater understanding of the importance of mentoring. The seminal work of Holland was outlined and helped to

explain why it is important for African American women to engage in mentoring relationships with faculty members and the benefits for both faculty and student.

In addition, a review was provided concerning HRD's role in mentoring individuals within an organization. The review gave insight towards understanding the development of the individual and the role mentoring has upon their success within the organization. Further, the theoretical frameworks for this study outlined the importance of voice, benefits of mentoring and social capital. The first theory Black feminist thought provided an appropriate context for this study and the importance of voice for African American women and their story. The second theory multicultural feminist mentoring model emphasizes the idea of mentoring and the issues related to power and empowerment. Finally the third theory, social capital identifies how African American women can utilize their social networks to navigate the doctoral program.

However, there still remains a gap in the literature as it relates to the role of a mentor and the importance of the mentoring relationship in the success of doctoral attainment for African American women in HRD programs.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

As a qualitative researcher, I was interested in the mentoring experiences of African American women HRD doctoral students and how they make meaning of their mentoring experiences with faculty. This study utilized qualitative methods for data collection and analysis. "Qualitative researchers are interested in the meaning people have constructed, that is how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world" (Merriam, 2009, p. 13). Qualitative research requires the researcher to be the primary instrument for data collection. It allows the researcher and the participants the opportunity to learn from each other through dialogue. Creswell (2007) suggests,

> We conduct qualitative research when we want to empower individuals to share their stories, hear their voices, and minimize the power relationships often exist between a researcher and the participants in the study…. We conduct qualitative research because we want to understand the contexts or settings in which participants in a study address a problem or issue. (p. 40).

Research Questions Restated

As stated before, the following research questions that will guided this study:

Research Question 1: What were the perceptions of faculty mentoring for African American female doctoral students in this HRD program?

Research Question 2: What were the experiences of faculty mentoring for

African American female doctoral students in this HRD program?

The goal of this study was to learn from these African American women as they shared their multiple experiences and various truths to understand the uniqueness of each individual story. In order to understand the role of mentoring in the lives of these women, it was important to understand the broader environment of their lives, which could include early learning experiences and career and psychosocial support. These experiences are important in crafting this study due to the influences these constructs have had upon the participants.

Research Design

The underlying research paradigm guiding this research is basic qualitative research. According to Merriam (2002) "the goal of the researcher is to understand how participants make meaning of a situation or phenomenon"(p. 6). When conducting a basic qualitative study understanding the phenomenon, along with "a process, the perspectives and worldviews of the people involved, or a combination of these (p. 6)

The goal for this research was to better understand the experiences of African American female doctoral students who were currently enrolled in an HRD programs. Aligned with Black feminist thought and multicultural feminist mentoring model, the phenomenon investigated was the students' mentoring relationship with faculty and how the relationships helped or hindered their process through the doctoral pipeline. Black feminist thought explains that each individual woman's narrative is important and allowing her to tell her own stories as a Black women is equally important. The multicultural feminist mentoring model supports Black feminist thought because it

embraces the ideas of empowering the mentee, equity among the mentor and mentee, and mutuality.

Sampling Procedure

Participant Recruitment

The participants were recruited via email shown in Appendix D according to the information found on the university's website. The email contained a letter as shown in Appendix D requesting the participants' involvement in the study. A follow-up phone call took place if the participant's number was available. Each participant also received a consent form as shown in Appendix E that explained the research study, the amount of time the interviews would last, and information regarding efforts to ensure their participation would remain confidential. According to Miles and Huberman (1994) the selecting of participants for qualitative investigation includes identifying individuals whose potential contribution would add to the research. Therefore, in order to better understand the experiences of African American female doctoral students enrolled in HRD program, the participants were chosen primarily because of their connection to the phenomenon being investigated. The phenomenon investigated was the students' mentoring relationship with faculty and how the relationships helped or hindered their process through the doctoral pipeline.

All of the participants were African American women who were enrolled in an HRD program at a PWI. Since there was an affiliation between the HRD program and myself, each participant was assured that their involvement and participation would be voluntary, information that could potentially identify them would be minimalized, and

their information would remain confidential. In order to assure them of this, participants were asked to create a pseudonym that was used throughout the study. I also assured them any names used during the interviews would be changed to pseudonyms. Any potentially identifying information was changed or excluded An additional step came in the form of having the co-chair of my committee who was outside of the HRD program read drafts of the dissertation first as an additional precaution against identifying information being included in the document.

All of the participants were over the age of 18, so obtaining parental permission was not necessary. The consent form used for this study was established according to guidelines set forth by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Texas A&M University. A copy of this consent form is found in Appendix E, which included the general purpose of the study, participants' right to cease involvement in the study at any time, and their written consent (signature) to be involved in the research study.

Ethically, conducting research under the control of the university mandates that the design is reviewed and approved by Texas A&M University Institutional Review Board to ensure the study's ethical issues were addressed and plans were in place for any problems that could arise during the study. These components were examined and approved through the Texas A&M University Institutional Review Board-Appendix E (IRB Approval Protocol # 2012-0431).

Research Site Selection

The six participants recruited for this this study were African American women enrolled in a specific HRD doctoral program at Southeast University,[2] a predominantly white research university located in the southeastern region of the United States.

Criteria for being included in the study were (a) that the participant had been at Southeast University for the entirety of their HRD doctoral program, (b) had completed at least the qualifying exam stage of their program, (c) and identified as an African American woman. It was important that each participant had completed the qualifying exam because it insured that participants had a chance to acclimate themselves with the department including faculty and students.

Southeast University is one of the largest, public, land, sea, and space grant institutions in the United States, with an overall student enrollment of over 50,000 students. The college of education that houses the HRD program was the focus of this study and had a fall 2012 enrollment of 91 doctoral students. (Southeast University, 2012).

Data Collection

Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated that in "naturalistic investigations, which are tied so intimately to contextual factors, the purpose of sampling will most often be to include as much information as possible" (p. 201). The sample selection should yield the most information about the phenomenon of interest. According to Gay and Airasion (2003), the qualitative researcher seeks to obtain a deep understanding of a relatively few

[2] All proper names and specific places are pseudonyms.

participants. The key to "sampling" in qualitative research is to choose good participants who can provide the insights needed to obtain the desired richness of qualitative data (p. 195).

To better understand the phenomenon as described from the perspectives and expectations of the participants, it was beneficial to choose a small sample, thus this study involved six participants. Purposeful sampling was used to reach the sample population. The type of purposeful sampling used was a unique sample. This sample was based on "unique, atypical, perhaps rare attributes or occurrences of the phenomenon of interest" (Merriam, 2009, p. 78).

For qualitative research, a primary source of data is derived from interviews with people closely associated with the phenomenon under investigation (Merriam, 2009). In this study each of the six participants was interviewed individually. The approach for collecting the data for this study was semi-structured interview questions as shown in the Appendix F. This allowed for a more conversational design and allowed the participants the freedom to express their views.

The interviews served as the key tool of data collection. The interviews were conducted in a comfortable, quiet, and private environment (Creswell, 2007), which allowed the researcher to build a positive rapport with the participants. Each interview lasted approximately one hour. This time was used to establish a rapport and to gain a biographical overview of the participants' life experiences and mentoring relationships. A digital recorder and audiocassette tape recorder were used to record the participants dialogue and responses. During the research process, I intended to conduct a focus

group but was unable to do so because the participants were declined to do so. They declined to participate in a focus group because of the sensitivity of the study and they did not feel comfortable speaking amongst the other participants about their educational journey while enrolled in the HRD program. Other reasons included from some of the faculty members at the institution were their family members and some of the faculty members were friends of theirs.

Data Analysis

Conducting the data analysis was exciting and was done in keeping with qualitative practice. "Data analysis in qualitative research consists of preparing and organizing the data for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a process called coding" (Creswell, 2007, p.148). Merriam (2009) suggested that when conducting a qualitative study, the researcher must convince the reader that the procedures have been followed faithfully. According to Strauss (1987), the goal of coding in qualitative research is not to produce counts of things but to "fracture" the data and reorganize it into categories.

Constant comparative analytical method (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003) was used to get a sense of the data by identifying codes and then grouping those codes into categories or subcategories. Creswell (2002) added that the process of coding data occurs during data collection, leading to the units or data codes into categories. Thematic analysis was utilized in this study for each interview. According to Riessman (2008), thematic analysis focuses on the content of the narrative, which allows the researcher to identify similarities and differences between themes in the data.

The essential steps that were taken for the data analysis included:

After each interview was completed, I always listened to each interview and read over my field notes to make sure that I was capturing the essence of each participant's narrative. This was done usually in my car before I left the location of the interview. It allowed me to hear their tone and mood during the interview. It was also a checking system for myself, to make sure each interview recorded did not have any errors or mistakes due to the tape not recording correctly. Afterwards, each interview tape was transcribed. The amount of data derived from the interviews was overwhelming in the beginning. I read each transcript very carefully along side with the fields taken during the interviews.

Reading over the interviews, allowed me the opportunity to re-familiarize myself with the interviews and the participants. I began to code the data, I removed information that was not relevant to the understanding of African American women perceptions and experiences as a doctoral student in an HRD program, using the theoretical frameworks of Black feminist thought, multicultural feminist mentoring model and social theory. Creswell (2002) speaks about this same process of coding data, which will lead to unit or data codes within the data. This process was difficult in the beginning because I felt that that everything the participants had given me was important. However, my first question asked, "How you got to be where you are?" I noticed that there were statements derived from asking this question that were not relevant to the study. After further review, I was able to notice the statements that began to stand out.

After reading the first interview, many themes and categories emerged. Before I was able to move forward, member checks (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) were completed. All participants were emailed a copy of their transcript and asked to check for accuracy along with asking if the participants would like to elaborate on any of the questions asked.. All six agreed that the transcript was accurate.

Afterwards, I continued to immerse myself into the statements that were emerged and formulated meanings from those statements. After further examination of the interviews, I was able to refine categories into more concise themes and categories. The themes that emerged were, "Where They Are: Perception and Expectation" and "Actual Experience". The categories that emerged were "Defining Mentor versus Advisor", "Race and Gender", "Benefits to Mentee" and "Benefits to Mentor". Afterwards, thematic analysis was utilized. Riessman (2008) described it as allowing the researcher to identify similarities and differences between the themes and data. I first looked at the categories and made meaning of those. The first category was defining mentor versus advisor. The participants were able to give an overview of their definition of mentor versus advisor and the differences and similarities between the two. Afterwards, the participants explained what characteristics they looked for in a mentor and what are the benefits to the mentor and the benefits to the mentee/protégé. The category "Race and Gender" emerged throughout the interview in various areas.

In order to validate the themes, my co-chair who is outside of HRD was used as a reviewer. She reviewed the key components of the analysis to assure the themes and

categories along with the statements were significant. She agreed that the themes, categories and statements were a good representation of the study.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is derived from a term that refers to the credibility of a study and the researchers belief that the phenomenon under investigation had been captured (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Prolonged engagement, triangulation, peer review, negative case analysis, clarifying researcher bias, member checks, thick description, and external audits are suggested by Creswell (1998) as procedures to ensure credibility. For this study I used the following strategies, (a) thick description, (b) member checks, (c) clarification of researcher bias, (d) peer review, (e) reflective journaling, and (f) triangulation. In the following paragraphs, I provide a brief description of each factor listed above.

Thick Description

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), thick description provides a detailed and rich depiction of the participants and/or the setting under investigation. Holloway (1997) explained that *thick description* refers to the detailed account of field experiences during which the researcher makes explicit the patterns of cultural relationships and puts them in context.

Member Checking

Member checking allows the participants in the study to test the interpretations, findings and conclusions of the research (Linclon & Guba, 1985). It also allows for the participants to ensure that the transcription of their interview is accurate and that they

trust that the study was carried out with integrity. For this study and follow-up, I emailed each participant a copy of their transcript, which included the data transcribed and some preliminary findings, which are shown in Appendix G. I also asked participants to confirm if I had truthfully captured the essence of their experience. Each participant emailed after receiving their transcript me and indicated that the transcript was accurate and that I had captured the essence of their experience.

Clarifying Researcher Bias and Peer Review

Clarifying researcher bias means that my biases and assumptions as an African American female researcher were noted as well as my participation as a doctoral student in an HRD program. Creswell (1998) clarified researcher bias, indicating that the researcher comments from the outset of the study and pre-conceptions and assumptions may be present due to past experiences or biases that may affect the study.

Peer review was used in this study to provide an external check of the inquiry process, which allowed me to discover my own biases and clarify my interpretations. Before conducting the interviews, I reflected upon my own perspectives and preconceived ideas because I am an African American female doctoral student in an HRD program at a PWI. I identified my own preconceived ideas and wrote them down in a journal, which was part of my reflective journaling. Moustakes (1994) termed it as a process of "setting aside prejudgments and opening the research interview with an unbiased, receptive presence" (p.180). Lisa, an African American graduate student at Southeast University assisted me with peer debriefing. She was currently in the third year of her doctoral program and would be completing her dissertation proposal hearing

within the next few months. To understand how views can change, Lisa interviewed me to help me understand my voice and to recognize my assumptions and the changes that had been made. My view did change because I was able to view the participants through their eyes. I was able to set aside my assumptions and focus on their viewpoint.

Reflective Journaling

Reflective journaling allowed me to examine my "personal assumptions and goals" and clarify "individual belief systems and subjectivities (Russell & Kelly, 2002, p. 2). By keeping a reflective journal as shown in Appendix H, this allowed me the opportunity to disassociate my own opinions and perceptions from the perspective of the participants and ensure the findings were accurate.

Triangulation

Within-method triangulation (Burns & Grove, 1993) was also used in this study through qualitative methods of data collection such as interviews and diary keeping. This was another safeguard to help insulate my bias as a researcher and limit the possibility that my bias would affect my interpretation of the data.

The Researcher's Positionality

In a phenomenological study, Moustakas (1994) stressed the importance of identifying the researcher's positionality by "setting aside prejudgments, biases, and preconceived ideas about things" (p. 85). According to McMillian and Schumacher (2006) as "qualitative researchers we become immersed in the situation and the phenomenon being study" (p.16) such as studies where interviews are used as the source of collecting the data. The connection between the qualitative researcher and the

research conducted, openness and candidness about the researcher is essential. It is important that I reflect upon my own experiences and reflect upon how my biases might impact the research process.

My Journey

Before entering into graduate school, I worked at Tier 1 research institution as a regional financial aid counselor/ advisor. I traveled ninety-five percent of the time for my job advising high schools, parents and students about financial aid resources available to them. After about a month on the job, I decided to apply for the master's program in HRD. As a first-generation African American woman who had already earned an associate degree in accounting and bachelor degree in business, it was an honor to be accepted into the masters program at a Tier 1 research institution. Upon being admitted to the program, I didn't actually fully grasp or understand the world of HRD. I assumed since I had a business degree and a business background that HRD had something to do with human resources.

I continued to work full-time and attend school full-time. After my first semester, I was ready to quit the program because one of the courses that I was enrolled in involved a lot of planning and due to me working full-time and traveling it was hard to juggle my time. After speaking with some of my peers and my parents, I was convinced that I could survive my life as a graduate student. I continued to push forward and within 2 years, I had completed the program and received my master's degree. I remember telling my friends, while I was enrolled in the program; some of the months were a blur. I never had the opportunity to get to know my professor or my classmates. Mentoring

and networking was not an option for me to chose from. The only exciting times I had to look forward to during my enrollment in the program was during registration for classes. I never had the chance to gain a relationship with my peers nor my professors and others within the HRD field.

The life changing moment came around a semester before gradation, a professor within my department, whom I had for a class, approached me and asked if I was going to apply to the doctoral program. I immediately responded and told her that the thought had not crossed my mind, but I would take it into consideration. Over the next couple of months, I went back and forth with the idea of applying to the program. My main concern was funding. I prayed and asked God that if he would supply the funding, I would quit my job and dedicate my time fully to the program. I applied to the program and my prayers were answered. I received a letter from the university indicating that I had received a fellowship for three years. A few weeks later, I received my letter from the department stating that I had been admitted into the program. I was ecstatic and nervous all at the same time. The challenges I faced while obtaining my master's I did not want to encounter. I wanted to fully devout my time to the program and gather as much knowledge as I could.

Upon enrolling into the doctoral program, my main goal was to find a professor that I could work for as part of my graduate assistantship that would mentor and support me during my tenure in the program. I emailed a few professors and soon received an offer to work with one of them. The professor was a bi-racial professor but she identified as an African American female. I was excited that someone had opened the door for me

to work as their graduate assistant but also she also resembled me. She identified as African American, she was a woman in her early 30's and she resembled me. The only downside was that she was not a professor in my program but I figured that since I had someone who looked like me I would be fine. The other stuff in the back of my mind that I was concerned with soon faded away.

I started the first semester on a strong note. She had involved me in a research program she was involved in. We traveled and presented the findings at numerous conferences over the next few semesters with others students. I also had the opportunity to write with her on several papers that were presented as articles for journals. So, the networking and mentoring had begun with her but as stated previously, she was not a professor in my program. The institution I attended also provided opportunities such as funding and a research class for students to attend our annual HRD conference. I myself received funding a few times to attend the conference and during my master's program I participated in the research course. My interest in the subject of mentoring for African American women enrolled in doctoral programs begun about a year and half after I was enrolled in the program. It showed that the program lacked mentoring opportunities and programs for students in particular African American women enrolled in the program. For instance, although I had the opportunity to work as a graduate assistant with the professor I mentioned above, she was not in my field. I was gaining knowledge as it relates to how to conduct research but I was not receiving mentoring or advice from the faculty in HRD.

I remember having a conversation with one of my friends, who was an African American female student enrolled in the same program as I about our future in the program. We discussed how were we going to make it through this program if no one invested in us. We sought help outside of our department and program but we were yearning for help within our program. Our only conclusion was to rely on each other for academic support. For instance, when I started to prepare for my preliminary exams, there was a limited instruction given on how to prepare for this exam. I relied on my friends for support and guidance. A few of us were taking our preliminary exams around the same time and decided to create a study/writing group. The group provided accountability for each of us. We were able to bounce ideas off of one another but we also had the support of each other as we prepared for these exams. It was also evident that we depended upon each other for support and ways of surviving graduate school. This support covered a multitude of areas such as which courses to take, the research areas for the professors in our department, what conferences we should attend, where to locate funding, and life balance.

After completing my preliminary exams spring 2010, I applied for teaching assistantships and started teaching the following summer semester after completing my preliminary exam. I was very appreciative to receive this position because it allowed me the opportunity to receive some teaching experiences, as other students in other programs did not have this same opportunity. As I stated before, I started teaching in the summer and started working on my proposal for my dissertation. I must say this was one of the most trying times during my entire time in the program. Over the course of the

year, the chair of my committee left my committee and I felt like I was between a rock and hard place. During this time I felt alone, defeated, isolated, and overwhelmed. Instead of me moving forward I was moving backwards. I was enjoying teaching but as far a me progressing through the program and completing my proposal I felt as though a brick wall was in front of me and there was no way to get around it. Each time that I thought I was moving forward, I took ten steps backwards. I decided that I was ready to leave the program and told my parents and friends that after the spring semester I was going to leave the program.

My mother told me to pray and that things would soon change. A few days later I emailed one of the Caucasian faculty members in our program and asked him if he would meet with to discuss was of me moving forward. I met with him and he gave me some great direction and encouragement. He also informed me that he would be willing to serve on committee as my chair and the professor that I worked with for my graduate assistantship served as my co-chair. I felt extremely inspired and motivated to continue the program. Both professors gave me great direction and mentoring during this time. We met weekly sometimes twice a week. During this time we not only met about my proposal but we also talked about my feelings as graduate student and if my needs were being met. During that time I felt that my needs were being met. Within a month and a half, my proposal date was set and my future in this HRD doctoral program seemed a little brighter.

I successfully completed my proposal defense and afterwards started to progress towards completing my dissertation. Afterwards I contacted my participants for my

study for time to interview them. Around the time that I had completed my interviews with my participants and transcribing their interviews, my wall came crashing down again, my new chair left the university and I had to search for a new committee chair again. Also, during this time I was still teaching a full load of classes and at one time I had over 80 students during a semester. Granted I still had my co-chair who offered me tons of support and advice, but I still felt defeated and that I was once again on this journey along. Thankfully I was able to find another faculty member in my program to chair my committee. Although I was happy that she stepped up to the plate, I still felt overwhelmed. I couldn't believe it had happened to me again.

She reviewed my proposal and agreed to allow me to continue to work from where my chair and co-chair had approved. I soon completed my first draft of my dissertation with the help of my co-chair and submitted it to her. I didn't expect to get the reaction I did from her. The chapters that she agreed for me to as well as the new chapters of my dissertation she decided to make me change. Here I was again in the same position as I was before. I never had the opportunity to meet with her but once because she agreed for me to continue to work with my co-chair and once I submitted to her the first draft she decided to change the entire format. I decided at that moment that if I wanted to complete the program within the next semester I would have swallow my pride and pray that it all works out between she and I. Over the course of the semester we only met twice because she was never available, so I had to resort to my co-chair for support. Each time that I met with her I felt that I was moving in a positive direction, instead I was moving backwards once again. After several rounds of drafts and

corrections my committee felt that I was ready to set a date. I set my date and four days before my defense date my new chair decided to leave my committee. She never contacted me stating that she was leaving my committee, instead I was told by other members of my committee. When I was told the news I was stunned and numb. My goal at that point was to finish. I met with the department head whose expertise is in the field of human resource development and he agreed to chair my committee along with my co-chair who had been with me from the very beginning. A new date was set and I successfully defended my dissertation.

My co-chair who has expertise in qualitative research stuck with me through thick and thin and in my opinion she the meets the definition of a mentor. She was trustworthy, empowered me as an African American graduate student, supportive, provided networking and research experiences. My experience as a doctoral student provided a connection between the participants and myself. I was aware of the demanding nature of graduate school but I was not prepared for the roadblocks and brick walls that I experienced. The study reveled the candid responses from the participants. My view of this entire process is through a critical interpretive worldview. I believe that people construct their individual experiences through their lived experiences. Although, each person's reality is different, there is some shared belief.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine the mentoring experiences of African American women HRD doctoral students and how they make meaning of their mentoring experiences with faculty. Given that the HRD field is growing and the

number of African American women are continuing to enroll, the goal of this study was to contribute current literature and knowledge about how mentoring is beneficial towards the success of African American female doctoral students who major in HRD programs.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

This chapter represents the research findings of this research I conducted. The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of faculty to student mentoring relationships and to gain insight into the perceptions and expectations of African American female doctoral students enrolled in an HRD program at a PWI who engage in mentoring relationships with faculty. The data was collected from six interviews with African American female students.

Participant Descriptions

Table 1 below lists the six African American women who participated in this study. All participants are enrolled at Southeast University seeking their Doctor of Philosophy degree (Ph.D.) in HRD. The participants enrolled in the program between the years of 2008 and 2009 and now are in the forth year of the program. Of the six participants, only one lived in the same city of the university when she applied to the program and currently still lives there. Two of the participants lived in other states upon applying to the program and currently live in the same city as the university. Two of the participants lived in in the same city of the university upon applying to the program but moved to other cities due to their family relocating and commutes to the university when necessary. Only one participant lived outside the city when she applied to the program and commutes weekly.

Table 1

Participant Descriptions

Name	Age	Location	Program Year	Exams
Ellis	36	Midwest	4th year	Dissertation Proposal
Kelly	32	South	4th year	Qualifying Exam
Paige	29	South	4th year	Qualifying Exam
Charley	31	South	4th year	Qualifying Exam
Earline	38	South	4th year	Preliminary Exam
Felisha	45	South	4th year	Preliminary Exam

The following are narratives of six women who participated in this study and key quotes that resonated from their interviews about the role of mentoring. As indicated above all of the participants are enrolled in the HRD program at Southeast University. The names used are pseudonyms chosen by the participants.

Ellis

Ellis was a 36-year-old student who had lived in the Midwest for seven years before moving back to the South to work in a human resources department. Upon moving back to South she continued to work full-time in human resources and decided to pursue her doctoral degree in HRD. She also holds an MBA. Ellis's currently lives in the same city of the university and is reminiscent of a nurturing mother. She eludes the personality of someone who is concerned about a person's wellbeing and happiness. For

instance, during her interview she spoke about how she would always check in with the professors to see how they were doing:

> So like even with everything going on, like I emailed him saying "Dr. Jenkins, just checking on you. With all the changes going on, I really hope you're keeping your head up" and he never responded. He's always Johnny on the spot, always. So when I see him, and I say, "Dr. Jenkins, how are you doing?" And he'll be like, "I'm fine, I'm fine." And I'm like "Your face is telling me something else."

At the time of the interview Ellis was in the 4th year of the doctoral program and had completed her dissertation proposal. She emphasized the importance of a mentoring relationship as "I guess knowing that somebody cares, knowing that somebody values what you have to offer, and is willing to invest and make sure that those skills or characteristics continue to be build upon while you're here…I feel like I've wanted and yearned for a mentor, but haven't gotten what I expect of a mentor.

Kelly

Kelly was a 32-year-old student who had lived in the South all of her life. At the time of the interview she lived in the same city as the university. Before starting the doctoral program, Kelly worked in a domestic violence shelter and decided that she needed a change in her career. The opportunity presented itself and she had a chance to speak to student who was already enrolled in the program. This prompted Kelly's decision to apply to the doctoral program. She explained it as an the individual "kind of pumped it and told me all these things about it, so I applied." Before applying Kelly had

already received her master's degree in Public Health. Kelly currently works as a 4th grade teacher and enjoys mentoring younger girls. She stated, "it just feels good to know that I am helping someone and contributing to the wellbeing of someone, just like someone has helped me." Kelly was a 4th year student and had completed the qualifying exam. She explained that a mentor:

> Is basically a person that kind of help guide and push you along a desired path – not necessarily their desired path, but yours. They inspire you, they encourage you. And not just when things are good, but you know, when you want to give up, you want to give in, you know, they're there to give you that pat on your back and kind of push you on down that road.

Paige

Paige was a 29-year-old student who had also lived in the South all of her life and commuted to campus. She also worked in the human resources field during the time of the study and while she was enrolled in the doctoral program. After the completion of her master's degree in HRD, she was encouraged by one of the faculty members to pursue her doctoral degree.

Paige is a very mild-tempered woman. She explained that she does not like to put up a façade of someone that she is not. She would rather be herself and relaxed around those who are around her. At the time of the interview, Paige was in the 4th year of the program and had completed her qualifying exam. She stressed that a mentor is, "someone who will lead the way for you. I don't want to say it's your prodigy, but it's someone who's been where you are trying to get."

Charley

Charley was a 31-year-old student who had lived in the South most of her life. She also lived out of town and commuted to school as often as needed. Charley received her master's in education administration and worked as a high school English teacher. After completing her master's degree she decided to pursue her doctoral degree in HRD. Charley is also a very mild-tempered, no nonsense type of woman. She stated that her expectations of her mentor were simple, "You tell me what I need to do to get through this program and I won't ask anything more of you." She was a 4th year student and had completed her qualifying exam. She described a mentor as "someone invested, interested, proactive, knowledgeable and willing."

Earline

Earline was a 38-year-old student who holds a master of business administration degree (MBA). She lived in the South Atlantic region before moving to the South to pursue her doctoral degree. Before applying to the program, she worked as an elementary teacher. Earline has an extroverted personality. She is very optimistic and enjoys talking and engaging with other people. She was in the 4th year of the program and had completed her preliminary exams. She explained her perception of a mentor as:

> Well, in my mind, the term mentor is somebody who is guiding you . . . almost not treating you like a baby, but sometimes when you're new, or if you're a neophyte, or beginner, freshman, whatever you call it, I think people should become more involved in you because I think it's, especially if they bring you here, or if they campaign for you to be here.

Felisha

Felisha was a 45-year-old student who worked in the criminal justice field and lived the same city as the university upon pursing her doctoral degree. About a year and a half after starting the program she moved and currently commutes to campus when necessary. She also holds her master's degree in HRD and decided to pursue her doctorate. Felisha can also be categorized as someone with an extroverted personality. She works well with people and can be considered as a natural leader with very strong communication skills. She was also a 4th year student and had completed her preliminary exams. Felisha defines a mentor as:

> A person who acts in a supporting role to help you, I guess, be the best student, be the best employee in a job. Their goal is really they have your best interests at heart. And although their role isn't a friend that just offers support – they offer support, guidance, direction, and criticism.

Categories and Themes

After numerous readings of the interviews, coding and listening to the data recording, I present the findings starting with the participant's first experiences of graduate school. Table 2 lists the categories and themes derived from this study. The first theme to emerge was how they got to where they are, the perception,, expectation and actual experiences between the women and faculty. Also included were the influences that motived them to apply to the program and continued to mentor and support them throughout the program.

The second theme was their actual mentoring experiences and how they made meaning of their experiences. This section also included the challenges they faced such as (a) navigated program alone such as yearning for support, help and assistance, (b) sought out mentor, (c) maintaining a relationship with mentor, (d) being valued as an African American woman. As noted in Chapter II, the research on mentoring for African American female doctoral students is limited; the final section was labeled as categories rather than themes. They are: (a) the participants' definition of mentor and advisor and the role of each (b) the different characteristics of a mentor versus advisor, (c) the benefits for the mentee and (d) the benefits to the mentee.

Table 2

Categories and Themes

Theme 1:How they got to where they are	**Theme 2: Actual Experiences**	**Categories**
Influences	Challenges	
Family	Navigated alone	Defining mentor versus advisor
Friends	Sought out mentor	Race and gender
Faculty	Maintaining relationship with mentor	Benefit to mentee
	Being valued as an African American women	Benefit to mentor

Theme I: How They Got to Where They Are

In this section, the participants discussed the factors that influenced their decision to enroll in a graduate program at Southeast University. Throughout the interviews, the participants repeatedly expressed the influences that prompted their decision to attend graduate school. For example, Ellis indicated that although her mother had obtained her

PhD, she only asked for her assistance in reading over her essay to apply to program. She implied that she wasn't planning on pursing her degree but because she had nothing better else to do after obtaining her master's degree she decided to apply. " So I was living in another city for 7 years. And I knew I was coming back…I knew I would go wherever I got a job. So I got job here and once I got here, I was like well, what else are you going to do but go to school, because it's a college town. My mom has her PhD – I never thought I would get a PhD, because I was done after my master's." I proceeded to ask Ellis about the people who helped her along her educational journey. Her response, "My mom, maybe. As far as people helping me, I can't say anybody helped me.

Another participant, Felisha, discussed how returning to graduate school to obtain her doctoral degree was to allow her to change job professions with multiple options available upon graduating. "Well, my first experiences in graduate school were as a nontraditional student, returning as an adult. I had been away from school for several years, and I had already had a family and just decided that, you know, I wanted to go back and pursue a degree, for my secondary degree.

Those who supported and helped Felisha along her educational journey included her husband and family and later on her academic advisor. She commented that she would "probably say initially it was my husband and family, were very supportive. And as far as the school side of things, at the university level it was really the academic advisor, I believe. And I felt like she helped me quickly familiarize myself with all of the changes that had taken place in college, you know, since I had been away from that setting…. And I really had a huge learning curve. And although I had pretty good

computer skills, familiarizing yourself with accessing documents and library articles and things like that. It was quite intimidating." Felisha was frightened to apply to the program but with the help of her husband, family and the academic advisor she was able to move forward and apply to the program.

Kelly encountered another student who was in the program who persuaded her to apply to the program. "I was working at a domestic violence shelter. And basically we had very poor leadership. And at that point, I realized I didn't want to work under other people my entire life. And I felt like I needed to do something to advance my career, maybe needed a change. So I luckily ran into someone (a student) who was in the program, and they kind of pumped it up and told me all these things about it." Kelly's support during the first year of her journey included faculty members within her program who guided her as she navigated her way through the program during her first year.

Kelly explained that she "met Dr. James through a mutual friend. It was outside of the school environment – I was visiting a sorority sister . . . I went to her house, but that same night she's like, "Oh, we're going to visit a friend." So we went to the Johnson's house, and he was a person that prompted me to apply. And so I went to Southeast University to meet him on campus, and then he took me to meet Dr. Thomas, and I want to say Dr. Jenkins or another professor at the time. So Dr. James was like the first person that really prompted to apply. And then Dr. Thomas was another influential person as well."

Paige was fulltime employee of the university and was also persuaded to apply to the doctoral program from faculty members:

> I took a year off from my graduate program – I was working at Southeast University. And while I was there, I figured I wanted to get my graduate degree, so I quickly received my master's degree like in a year, year-and-a-half. However under that time, I was encouraged to continue on with my graduate degree, so I enrolled in the PhD program. And at that time I wanted to just be there for a few years, 3-4 years tops. And with that degree, whatever doors would open come from that graduate degree. So I got here because I was employed at Southeast University. I was done at the master's degree level, but a choice faculty member encouraged me to go on and benefit for me as well as being admitted into program. And here I am, ready to graduate soon.

Paige's educational journey was similar to Kelly's. During her educational journey:

> It was definitely Dr. Jenkins who encouraged me to continue in the program in the beginning…So getting the recommendation letter, my part, my professional statement completed, he helped me tremendously through that – he was available throughout that week getting me in the program. Then when I got accepted, he was there. But once I started the program, then his title changed too, so he became a little bit busier. But the fact that they were there, they were willing to help, but you had to go to them. So sometimes I didn't know what I needed – I needed someone to tell me what I needed to do. So I relied heavily in classmates, the people who were ahead of me in the program. I think there were no mentors for me other than my peers.

As many of the students indicated, they had help applying to the program and once enrolled they received little assistance with navigating the program in the beginning from their faculty members but as they progressed through the program, the faculty member became busy or their schedules did not permit them to advise or mentor the students as much as they would have liked. These students relied on the help and support of their family and friends as well as the academic advisor as one student stated but not faculty. Some of this had to do with the schedules of faculty and their availability. Charley's journey was quite different from the other students. She was a commuter student who decided to apply to the program after completing her master's.

> My first experience as a master's student, I got a master's in education administration. And I got it from a small university, local university, from where I was living at the time. And it did not prepare me (laughs) for this particular program. It was a non-thesis program, so we just had to take our classes, and we did all these fun things in our classes, because it was for education. And so then I moved to this program, and I don't know how I got here (laughs) – I'm still here somehow.

Upon applying and being admitted into the program, Charley navigated throughout the program on her own and sought out help from her friends just as the other participants specified:

> No one… I was living in a completely different city ten hours away. And I knew I wanted to get a PhD, but I wasn't quite sure what I wanted it in. I happened to be researching programs and saw this particular program and read about it, and

> that's what made me apply to this program…The only people – I've had some consistent friends, and they have helped me, some classmates who had gotten a master's in the program, or who were a few semesters or a few classes ahead of me. And so they've been kind enough to like share with me and take me through the process, as much as they can. But they're not advisors, you know (laughs), they've just given me information.

Earline, a student who graduated from an online course program, explained her first experiences as a graduate student at Southeast University as a culture shock. She felt isolated:

> It was a culture shock, because I had been out of school for a number of years. Even though I had gotten my MBA, it's still very different from you working and going to school, versus you being immersed in a school culture all day long without any work, so it was a culture shock. And plus, I'm moving from . . . I went from a semi-online . . . it wasn't really – it was face-to-face so the cultures are two very different worlds. So it was a culture shock for me. And then all the intensive writing, intensive reading, it was very, very . . . and a lot of times I felt like I was on my own.

Earline felt overwhelmed and pushed to apply and make her decision as to if she was going to attend. Once she accepted the invitation she didn't receive any assistance from either the faculty and staff nor the students.

> My whole experience is very unique in itself where I kind of . . . I applied . . . everything happened so fast – I met the recruiter, I applied, I came here. And

then it was almost like . . . because I know even though you cannot . . . some person cannot give you all of their time. Sometimes I wish it were a little bit more time given. I almost had to like feel my way through a lot of the experiences because when I came in . . . and not only am I looking at it from the perspective, from the standpoint of like the professors, I still feel like there should've been some assistance given by the students who were already in the program, who had already gone along the way.

Due to the lack of support Earline received, she navigated the process by herself:

> I've had several people to assist me like if I needed a printout of something, or if I needed to see something structural, I could email a couple people, the professors. But what I found very difficult was I think that they were too involved with too many things in order to give me a lot of attention at the onset. So that's where I had to start learning how to navigate certain systems on my own. I wasn't able to get as much help from them as I thought I could have. It was more like they were too involved in too many things to really give me their undivided attention. And I also felt like even with the students who had through some of the classes, they weren't very helpful in regards to showing me the lay of the land or whatever. It's almost like I had to feel my way through a lot of the processes on my own.

Category I: Defining Mentor versus Advisor

As discussed in the review of literature in Chapter II, extant research distinguishes between the roles of an advisor versus the role of a mentor. This theme

also emerged in the participant interviews. In this section, the participants' thoughts on the role of mentor versus advisor are shared. For many of the participants there was not a significant distinction between mentor and advisor. Some suggested that their advisor and mentor shared some of the same roles and characteristics while others implied they were different. For instance, Kelly looked at the roles of mentor and advisor as two totally different roles. She explained it as;

> Basically the advisor is like a position, basically. This is the person that you're supposed to go to. They might help you with that degree plan…kind of help you figure out what courses to make and what you should do. It may be an emotional connect there – it may not be an emotional connect. They may have your best interest at heart, or it may just be like, you know what, this is just another student on my caseload, let me do what I have to do and get them on out. Whereas a mentor seems to really have a vested interest in you – they may not be getting paid to do what they're doing, but they're going to do what they have to do to help you. They want to see you succeed, they want you to progress.

Kelly went on to explain that upon entering the program, the faculty members fit her definition of mentor.

> I would say definitely. I have a full-time job. And when I entered the program, I was also a full-time student. Needless to say, there were many long days, long nights, wanted to go crazy, wanted to cry, you know, all sorts of things, even contemplating quitting. But I was encouraged along the way, you know, I was told that you can do this. And so Dr. Thomas was very nice. And he helped to

> try to achieve a balance, you know, where I was able to obtain both…So through him I learned that, you know, yeah, it may take a little bit longer, and it may be some hard work, but you know you definitely can get through this. And so I felt very encouraged by him and Dr. James when he was on campus.

But, as Kelly moved throughout the program, the commitment from her faculty member that she viewed as her mentor and the department tapered off. I asked the question of how well the institution and department was meeting her mentoring needs as an African American woman in an HRD program.

> It's not happening. When I was on campus, you know, taking face-to-face classes, I felt a little more informed; more involved, and knew people. Because I mean I'd seen people, I would see professors, but you know, once I kind of backed away and started taking more online courses, I almost felt very disconnected, and like my chair was the only person I did have communication with. And that was when he was responding to my emails.

Ellis defined a mentor as "somebody that's willing or has ambition…an advisor is someone that's paid to tell you what classes to take or to avoid and to definitely take advantage of…they're not as personally invested in you as a mentor".

Similarly, Earline explained, "a mentor is somebody who grooms you, who in so many words, who raises you, who guides you, who grooms you for the next level. And grooming and advising are two different things to me." She went on to say that those who helped her apply and enroll in the program were very instrumental. She went on to explain:

> Some people are very instrumental in me getting here. And that goes back to like the social capital for you being here. You're here because you want to be here – I came because I wanted to be here. Even though the load was heavy, and you made a lot of transformational type of things with your life, I came because I wanted to be here. So a lot of times, it was in some ways, yeah, because of their pull, they're fighting for me at the table; I was able to be here. But I still would like to have had a little bit more . . . I don't want to say love, because they gave me love, but just a little bit more attention from them.

Charley's describes the role of mentor and advisor as similar roles:

> I see mentoring as a symbiotic relationship between two people where there is someone who is helping the other person get through the program, and benefiting from that because you always can learn from that person. So they're learning and you're learning, and helping you navigate through some situation…I see them as similar. A mentor is going to give you advice, and they're going to help you. And I think at this level, I think if we were talking about it on an undergraduate level, maybe I would see those two things as different. But I think at this level, a PhD level, those two terms go very close together to me. An advisor, a mentor, is someone who is helping you, and someone who you're going to seek out advice from, and to seek out direction from. If we didn't need that, I wouldn't need a mentor or an advisor, so I feel like they go together.

Later on, Charley spoke about how her friends met the definition of a mentor rather than the professors in her department. She went on to say that her friends meet the

definition of a mentor. "I think my friends meet the definition of mentor and advisor. Just thinking about like how I've explained it, they helped me navigate through the program. But I don't think that they completely meet it – it's not fair. I mean they're students too, so they can only . . . they're limited in what they can help me with". When she spoke about faculty members, she specified that she had help from faculty but it was limited. Specifically discussing the role of her faculty mentors, Charley explained:

> I've had help from some professors before, and like as long as I go to them and ask questions, most definitely they've helped and they've given advice and suggestions. But I don't know, I also think a mentor is proactive, and I've never had any proactively reach out to me…I've heard people talk about their mentors before, like "such-and-such is my mentor," and they've gone through like various things, just careers, education-wise, with mentors. And it seems like they just have a connection, and they have someone whom they can network with.

While the participants felt that they had adequate support in terms of advising, they felt a significant void in terms of mentoring – especially from faculty in the doctoral program.

Category II: Race and Gender

All of the participants agreed that as an African American woman in an HRD program, having a faculty member of color as a mentor while enrolled at a PWI was important. On the other hand, the participant's had diverse views of race and gender as a factor concerning mentoring. For instance, Ellis had a friendship with a non-black faculty member and viewed her as a mentor but the relationship had not moved towards mentorship.

> Grace is my chair of my committee, and we're not that much . . . probably just about few years' difference – she might be no more than 5 years older. But I really love her, I love how open she is, so why I haven't tried to make that into a mentorship, that's something I have to reflect on.

She viewed Grace as a sister, someone that she could confide and trust but also viewed another faculty member as a mentor but the mentorship did not move forward. She explained her feelings by saying,

> I think it might be our closeness in age. I think it might be the fact that, with everything going on, she's been very honest about what's going on. I feel that she's never judged me, even though at times I've been the worst, she's always still supported me, when probably she shouldn't have. She's showed me her vulnerability, and I've shown her mine. We'll cry together, we laugh together. I just have with Dr. Jenkins, like I check on him, but we don't have really honest conversations. That's the difference. With Grace, she'll tell you anything. So I think it's just the level of communication that we have.

The question was also asked if having a mentor of color was important to Ellis and her response was "yes… I think like for instance, I have Dr. Jenkins and I have Dr. Grace – [both faculty of color]. I think it tells you it's possible, you know what I mean? Like seeing somebody that's like you, tells you keep doing it, keep working keep writing, because there's a spot for you somewhere."

Charley also believed that it was important for African American women to have mentors. She acknowledged that:

> It's easy to get lost in the shuffle. I think any disenfranchised group needs mentors. Our struggles would be similar just like the Asian students who have come over. They have similar struggles – they seem to have a mentor, and they seem to know who the other people like them are…It's easy to feel like you're on the outside of that. So when you don't have a faculty member, someone who's in a position I guess of authority to reach out to you and talk to you and feel comfortable going to and feel like they have your best interests at heart, then I mean you're left out all the time. So we definitely need someone who we feel like we can go to.

Furthermore, she was baffled with the number of African American faculty available to the students in the department and would rather have a faculty member of color. Charley explained that it was hard for someone who is not like her or someone not Black understand her viewpoints and concerns. She felt that Dr. Grace was of color but "for Asian people, the stereotypes associated with them and their relationships with white people are so different."

> So it's hard for me – she has no idea what it's like to be of my color, or similar… Like a white person, you know, they might be nice to me, and they're going to do things. An Indian person or an Asian, they might be nice to me, and they're going to help me with things. But truly, to understand me, I feel like I would want somebody of color. And to me, of color applies to someone who's Latino or black, and so I will take those two as someone of color. And I think they would maybe understand a little bit more.

The question was also posed to Kelly, referencing whether it was important for these African American women to have a faculty member of color. She appreciated the availability to choose between a variety of races and genders. Kelly's response was revealed as a relief:

> I see both sides of this because both of the mentors that I have worked and gotten very close to are both white men. And I will say that they have been marvelous. Coming in the program, I definitely probably would've liked to have had an African American female, or even an African American male, maybe even a Hispanic, you know, to be there to kind of guide me. But these men, I think, at least they've done an excellent job kind of really helping me.
>
> I do think it's important to have black faculty in a program, just so see faces that look like yours. But due to personalities, some people just don't click. And I've discovered, just because we're black does not automatically mean we're going to get along; we're going to like each other. And sometimes we are maybe a little bit rougher on each other than other people are on us.

Afterwards, I proceeded to ask her what were the benefits or challenges of having a white faculty member as a mentor. The challenges as she explained it was that she had "lucked out with the men that I've dealt with, because I don't feel that they look at me as unequal or less than them. But I have heard of students who have felt like, some of the people they've interacted with look at them as maybe not equal, or they see them as a minority basically."

The benefit of Kelly's mentoring relationship with the faculty members as she called it "semi-beneficial". As she explained, "[This white faculty member has] been there for most of my needs. But do I think he could've potentially done more? Yes. But I feel like with the number of students he had, and a lot that he just had on his plate, maybe he couldn't just give his all to each student."

Earline commented that her mentor who was a White male outside of the faculty at Southeast University helped her advance through the job market. As she explained:

> This white guy that I know, he lives in North Carolina… he calls me… tells me like what job openings are at certain various institutions and stuff like that. So to me, he would be somebody that I would consider a mentor… he tells me what's going on, what I should say to people, how to negotiate certain things like with money or with anything. I can call him and ask him . . . basically I'm a black woman, but he's teaching me how to think like a white man.

Earline also noted there are some challenges of having a White faculty member:

> When they pretend like they're on your side – they're really not – they're going to use the information against you. That's been my experience. They put on this front like they're on your side; they're on your team. Even I notice that with Hispanic people, sometimes I find them to be a bit racist too. So you got to be careful who you choose. But then you get people like Dr. Manning over in the Service department – I felt like he was pretty up-and-up, but I didn't tell him everything.

Kelly appreciated the availability to choose between different races and genders as her faculty mentor. “Coming in the program, I definitely probably would’ve liked to have had an African American female, or even an African American male, maybe even a Hispanic… But these men (White), I think, at least they’ve done an excellent job kind of really helping me.”

Earline’s view of the institution was that she was not getting any mentoring and had to navigate the pipeline alone. She explained:

> There is still a void because it’s not necessarily you have somebody black because you’re black. I just wish we had more of what I’m not getting. I mean sometimes you can’t even put your hand on what you’re not getting, but I know I’m not getting it. I’ve been in this realm for so long of not getting like a hug from somebody, you know what I’m saying? That’s just an example. I’ve just been moving so long, I’ve grown accustomed to . . . you know what I mean, just not going to anybody – just figuring it out on my own.

Earline also noted that African American women need a faculty mentor of color or African American, “they understand, especially African American women in these PWI's – They understand what you’re going through, because they’ve experienced it at some point in time.” Felisha agreed that it is important for these students to have African American or faculty of color mentors. She pointed out that she would rather have an African American female faculty member but due to how far along she is in the program, she would take any faculty member:

> I think my preference would probably be an African American mentor, only because they have shared experiences, you know, having to deal with racism and bigotry and discrimination and things like that, which I think still occur at the university level. But you know, at this point in my program, I would take anybody, you know. I think my preference would be an African American female. I think if I couldn't get an African American woman, I would move to another minority male. And if I couldn't get one of those at that point, you know, I would probably take a white male. My experience has been that white females have been very . . . I don't know, standoffish, territorial, and catty. And so they would be my least preferred mentor.

Felisha also pointed out that the faculty members or mentors that she has been involved with may not know what mentoring looks like. She stated, "It seems as though we have a dream may be unattainable or naïve idea about what we want mentoring to look like. And maybe the reality is that it is goal-oriented, and it can only pursue one goal at a time." Felisha also pointed out that it is the responsibility of both parties (student and mentor/faculty). She explained;

> I think it goes for both. It is, "Can I be mentored by an African American woman who is going to nurture my soul, value me and my diversity, and at the same time help me to be successful or reach my goals?" Is that a reasonable expectation, or should my expectation be this person is going to help me get tenure, or this person is going to help me publish, or help me deal with the stress. But I don't know, like I said, if our expectations are reasonable.

Paige listed several reasons as to why it was important to have a faculty member that was African American or of color:

> For me, and my family at least, holidays are important. Whereas I think that a mentor that's not of color, they see it as you're in the program, this is what you have to do. They don't consider the family aspect of how important it is, or you're there because of your family. And I think it's consistent amongst many African American or people of color – they have traditions that, sometimes that override anything else, you know, what's important for the family… and then the mental aspect of can I do this? Am I a quota? You know, all those other things that go along with it. Having a person of color there to, again, explain . . . maybe even just to listen to your frustrations will go a long way. And I think for me, I can identify with a person of color and get past the barriers of being politically correct and my feelings. Whereas I think if it were someone who was not of color, I would have that wall up, I wouldn't give them the true transparent what I'm feeling,

Category III: Benefits to Mentee

The participants throughout the study specified the importance of having a mentor and the benefits that African American female doctoral students receive. This aligned very closely with the MFMM (Benishek et al., 2004) as outlined in Appendix B and discussed in Chapter II in the review of literature For instance, Earline concluded:

> The benefits are countless. I mean if you have one person you can go to, that's like this library, this person that you can go to. You can get so much from them

> if they can give it to you. And if you consider them your mentor, they are giving you what you need. But I mean yeah, they can help you along the way, help you in the job market, help you to navigate certain systems, have conversations, what to say to people, how to negotiate mortgages, everything. This is your mentor, you know what I mean, so they help you to navigate various processes throughout your life, wherever you may be, wherever you may go, this person has time for you.

Felisha's responded to the same question by saying:

> One of the benefits of having a mentor is, I guess, the security of knowing that you have this person who is thinking about and considering comprehensively your success, as opposed to people who are focusing on individual aspects that are siloed [separate or in isolation] of mentoring.

Felisha indicated they are aware of everything about you, including, "your strengths, your weaknesses, your shortcomings, and your tendencies. And I think that comes not from how well they know you, but how engaged they are in identifying anything that might help or detract from your success."

Kelly implied that it is important for African American women to have mentors. Even though these women have been known to be strong and courageous, they still need the support.

> A mentor gets you through tough times, you know, like sometimes we're not able to just . . . we're strong, you know, black women, we are strong, we try to make it through everything. You know, we hold ourselves up, and so on we hold

> others up. But sometimes we do reach a breaking point. That mentor is there to kind of pick you up and uplift you when it gets difficult, because it is going to happen at some point. They're just there to provide that extra push, that guidance, that umph [boost] that you need.

Charley also agreed that there are numerous benefits to having a mentor. She indicated:

> I don't know. I've heard people talk about their mentors before, like "such-and-such is my mentor," and they've gone through like various things, just careers, education-wise, with mentors. And it seems like they just have a connection, and they have someone who they can network with. Because when it comes time to look for a job, they already have this mentor who can guide them in the direction of where they need to go, when it comes time to complete a program and figure out the next step. We talked previously about how hard it is to just sometimes know where to go, because you kind of just get stuck in limbo. And I feel like a mentor can help alleviate some of that, some of the stress that I feel. I feel like a mentor could assure me, "Look, it is not that bad." it's like somebody to go through it with you, and you know that you're not alone.

Paige processed it as a reward both the mentor and the mentee would receive over a period of time. "

> There are so many benefits – the list I think is endless. I think the immediate . . . the benefit that you may not know right away, the transformational benefit would be you getting to your . . . getting beyond where you thought you would be. So for example, if I had a mentor to help me through this PhD program, which I

> don't – I'm seeking it, but I don't have it. Well, I get through the program – that's my goal – but that job was my transformation, if you will, from student to a faculty member at a college. I need a mentor that will help me get beyond my goal that I identify – that's how I know the success. I think a mentor that will tell you what you don't want to hear. So a mentor for me would give me those realistic kinds of goals. But also they would be there through the milestones. If I'm getting ABD my mentor should be there to, you know, if not that day, let's go to lunch, let's evaluate how I feel. So I think those peaks and valleys, I want a mentor to be there.

Category IV: Benefits to Mentor

Just as the mentee receives the benefits of having a mentor, as indicated in the MFMM (Benishek et al., 2004), the mentor has a sense of fulfillment for the support and guidance they have given the mentee. Paige stated, "The reward to the mentor is knowing, "that you help someone succeed in life. But I think the long-term after you kind of taught for a few years, that's what's more rewarding, I would think, to know that you helped somebody else along their way to get where they're trying to get to".

Kelly felt the benefit to the mentor was a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction that the mentor had been inspirational to their mentee. "The benefit that I think I receive is, it feels good to give back, you know. Money is not an answer to everything, and some things are just worth more than receiving money. And so it just feels good to know that I am helping someone, I am contributing back to the wellbeing of someone". Similarly, Charley stated;

> Even as a mentor, you go through this process, you become more well rounded. You become better. You learn just a little bit something differently, or you look at something differently, and you discover different facets of your own personality and knowledge that maybe you didn't know existed before. I think anytime you can't go wrong helping somebody, so there has to be some type. Even if it's just that feel-good feeling inside of yourself.

Earline noted, "They are getting some benefits, because when somebody is valuing your information, and they're coming back and bringing you their success stories, I can see where they would benefit from that." Felisha viewed it as being part of a creation. "I think to create or be a part of the creation of anything that is successful is rewarding. But I also think that in their guiding their mentors and providing instruction… it allows them to maybe see themselves in that relationship and reflect on the choices they would make, why and why not, and the choices they did make."

Theme II: Actual Experience

Although the participants indicated that there were many benefits and assets to their experiences in the program, it was also true that they encountered many challenges. In this section, the participants' thoughts on the roadblocks they encountered as students in their doctoral program are discussed.

Navigated Program Alone

Navigating alone was a recurring theme which the participants experienced frustration, doubt, uncertainty and defeat amongst other emotions. The six African American women in this study yearned for support, help and assistance from the

department and program. Charley explained a time when she felt overwhelmed because of uncertainty.

> I just took one class the first semester, and the first class I took was epistemology. But no one ever told me what epistemology was, so I actually had no idea what I was supposed to be doing. And I remember feeling very overwhelmed because it seemed like everyone knew what it was except for me. And I was just thrown into this class without any background or any information, and trying to just figure out what I am I supposed to be doing here.

Earline had the same feelings of isolation. She was not prepared for the new culture that she was about to embark upon.

> Like even here with my [graduate assistantship], when I first got here, I didn't know anything about Google Scholar, how to construct a CV or any of those kinds of things….I just feel like these people that are over you, they should be grooming you for these processes… for me, it has been a lot of dark before dawn. I don't know if you can relate to that or not, but it's been a lot of boom, you f'ed up, and then here is the good part.

Paige was unsure if faculty members would take her on as a mentee. She was afraid of denial. The question was asked if she would approach the faculty member to become her mentor. Her response, "And so I feel like I would get the answer, 'No, I can't be your mentor.' Actually I have got the answer, 'No, I can't help you because I have so much going on.' So there's an unbalance of workload – how can the students succeed, and they don't have the staff available to mentor these students."

Ellis indicated there is no outreach within the department to extend the invitation to students to receive mentorship:

> There's no, I guess, just checking in, making sure you're okay, how are you doing, how are you progressing? Are you okay? Do you feel like an included member of our department? There's nothing – you're out there on your own. Like you know how, when you start your proposal dissertation, that's when people say they feel like they're on an island. I would think that if I didn't live here, or if I was working full-time, I was on an island from the jump – not three years into my program.

Kelly also felt that the program was not supporting and giving her guidance. She indicated that her assistant principal, which she refers to as one of her mentors, is very accessible and provides guidance. As for her college mentor:

> That's a little bit more of a difficult . . . when I'm with him it's great, but accessing him has been a problem…It's a hassle to have to get a sub, or break my class up and ask my peers to teach them. I don't want to strain those relationships. So I can only meet him when he has office hours. And then it's great when he does respond to emails and so on.

Kelly goes on to say that it is unfortunate that mentoring isn't happening within the department. "It's kind of unfortunate, but I don't think the needs are being met. There's not any type of formal anything. And basically if you don't get out there and meet people and make those connections yourself, then you're not going to be connected."

The question was also asked of looking at her current situation, has not having a mentor impacted her success at the University. Her response,

> I would definitely say yes. I mean when I started the program in summer of 2008, and I had a motivation out of this world. I had just come out of a work environment that was so poor, that I mean I had all this in my brain, and I'm like okay, I want to be a good leader one day. So I started that program, and I was off, you know… Well, as time started to pass, and working full-time, being a student full-time, and then having sometimes-good mentors, sometimes not, my morale, my motivation level kind of went down.

Sought Out Mentor

Throughout the study, the participants refereed to seeking a mentor or sought out a member as the only option they had in order for a faculty member to mentor them. The outcome was not always positive. For instance, Paige was quoted earlier stating that if she approached a faculty member to become her mentor, the answer would be "no" due to other duties the faculty member had to perform. She also revealed that her mentoring needs were not being met because she did not have a mentor:

> My mentoring needs, they're not I would say. My needs, I would just say meets – there's no exceed above that. My mentoring needs I would say is not because there again, I have no mentor, there's no program set in place. There's not an environment conducive to having that relationship. Now my needs are being met because I'm in a program, I'm learning, I'm growing, there are opportunities

there for me to get financial assistance, and to take what I learned and apply it. But the mentoring need is not being met at all.

Ellis, on the other hand, had faculty members she would have sought out for various reasons but she did not seek them out. She had some life issues that she had to deal with and one of the faculty members was very inspirational to her but he was never assigned as her mentor. The question was asked does she have a faculty member inside or outside her department:

> No, except I want Dr. Jenkins, but he doesn't want me… Nobody has said, "How's Ellis? Let me latch on to her." Nobody. But I think the closest thing I have to a mentor is Dr. Jenkins… Thinking of who are choices are, the only other person I ever wanted to be my mentor was Dr. Thomas. But I would never have gone to him for a life situation, (laughs) you know what I mean? Like I want Dr. Thomas for professional reasons – I want Dr. Jenkins just to be part of my family.

Charley indicated that:

> I also think a mentor is proactive, and I've never had any proactively reach out to me… I have some faculty members that I like, and I hold in high regard. But I don't think they see me as their potential mentee, I guess. They are in my program… Every time Dr. Grace offers a class, I try to take it because that's how much I enjoy her classes, and I like her. And so I seek her out, but I never feel like she's ever . . . she's always very nice and polite and helpful when I asked. I never feel like she has a connection or she feels that same connection on her end.

Felisha sought out faculty members to become her mentor but she didn't quantify those who were assigned to her as mentors but as advisors.

> I've had mentors in my past careers, you know, past jobs and life in general. I think that although I was seeking a mentor in academia, I think what I ended up with was a variety of temporary advisors who would advise me on particular individual issues, but not necessarily my overall journey as a student.

Maintaining a Relationship with Mentor

The MFMM (Benishek et al., 2004) indicates the benefit of a mentoring relationship is the mentor will gain a colleague and friendship with mentee. The mentee will feel competent, learn to trust, respect self, gains appreciation of balance, and develops networks. The participants throughout their interviews implied they would like to continue a relationship with their mentor if it was possible and others stated that their relationships would end.

Earline, for instance, stated that she was not sure if her relationship would continue but "because I want to continue my articles and letting them know my progress and things like that," she would like for the relationship to continue. Paige also indicated that she would like for the relationship to continue but the dynamics of the relationship would change, "I think it would continue, but in a different way. You'll see that person for advice, and they'll be there through the ups and downs. But it'll alter in that from being a mentor/mentee to being more of a . . . it's a relationship that's already established. And so it'll be more of a friendship, than a mentor/mentee".

Conversely, the other participants did not perceive their relationship continuing. For instance, Ellis did not see the relationship continuing since she moved to a different department, "ending…feel like since I moved… a couple months ago. I mean I'll reach out to him and just check on him every once in a while, but if I don't, he won't – for sure he won't." Charley doesn't believe the relationship with her professor will continue because there was never a mentor/mentee relationship established. She stated, "I just want to get through my dissertation, I just want to get my degree, and then I'm going to move on with my life… I think that I would like for us to have a close relationship – I just don't feel like that it will ever be that way. And at this point, I may be too cynical and too jaded…I think it's too late for all that – I just need to get done."

Felisha believed that the relationships between students would continue rather the relationships between mentor and mentee. "No, I don't. I think that in attending conferences, I have found other African American women in similar situations who either didn't have a mentor or had a poor mentor, who we've agreed we will mentor each other." Kelly also had the same perception but her relationship would continue with someone outside of the department and university. "Quite frankly, my assistant principal is a maybe. Because after I graduate, I do plan on leaving education, or at least moving to a different position where I'm no longer a classroom teacher. So he's a question mark."

Being Valued as an African American Woman

Benishek, Bieschke, Park, & Slattery, 2004) mentioned that fostering a mentoring relationship will help "minimize the challenges women face towards reaching

their goals while remaining grounded in her/his value system and culture, not the culture of the mentor" (p.7)**.** For example, Paige doesn't consider the person she would have chosen to be her mentor to value her initially as an African American woman. As she explained:

> Yes, but not necessarily as an African American woman initially. Value me first as a person and what I can contribute, but see past my color and see past me as a woman. But when I do perform, recognize that I am a woman, and I am African American. That I have maybe set new goals and come past different obstacles of someone that is not a woman, that is not of color, may not have been able to achieve.

Kelly concluded that the faculty member would value her as an African American:

> Because this particular person is very into diversity and cultures and race and other people… I never seen race being an issue for him… and he was also open to different things. And you know, we even had some discussions about race. And he acknowledged different things that did happen throughout history, so he wasn't that typical white male who was in denial about different treatments of groups. He acknowledged it openly.

Charley did not have a response for the question of feeling valued as an African American woman. She stated, "I can't answer that question." The look on her face reveled to me that she was not comfortable talking about the professor that she would have viewed as a mentor to value her has an African American women. I proceeded to ask her if that person is committed to diversity. She responded:

> If diversity means having more like her [the professor] in a situation. I think that sometimes people – it depends on what you mean by diversity. Because sometimes people think diversity – when I say I want something to be diverse, they assume that I want it to be all black people because I'm black. And so that's not the case. To me, diversity means, like it's an equal number of everyone, all different types of people. And if that's what you mean by diversity, I don't know. But if you mean she wants people to be more like her, then most definitely she is committed to diversity, so I don't know

In addition, Felisha didn't agree that the faculty in her department valued her has an African American woman because they are not valued.

> No. I think . . . this is something I hadn't mentioned in the definition, but I think your mentor has to be in a position of power, meaning they either have, you know, reached where you're going, or they have experience, or they have some type of special knowledge or expertise at what you're trying to do. And I think right now the African American faculty members that we have; I don't think they feel valued in our department. And so if they have little or no power, and they don't feel valued, I don't understand how they can help guide me to reaching empowerment. I don't think they feel valued or empowered, and that's one of the directions I'm trying to move toward. And if they're not there, they can't help me get there.

Summary

In summary, the findings included the participant's first experiences of graduate school. The first theme to emerge was how they got to where they are, the perception, expectation and actual experiences the African American students had towards faculty, which also included the influences that motived them to apply to the program and also continued to mentor and support these women throughout the program. This section is important because it gives an overview of how the African American women got to where they are now.

The second theme was their actual mentoring experiences and how they made meaning of their experiences. This included the challenges they faced such as (a) navigated program alone, (b) sought out mentor, (c) maintaining a relationship with mentor, (d) being valued as an African American woman. The challenges are aligned with Collins (1986, 1990, 1998, 2002) Black feminist thought.

Finally, other factors that were important to the mentoring experiences of these African American women included the categories that emerged from the interviews which included: (a) the participants' definition of mentor and advisor and the role of each (b) the different characteristics of a mentor versus advisor, (c) the benefits for the mentee and (d) the benefits to the mentee These categories aligned with (Benishek et al., 2004) MFMM used as a theoretical framework in this study.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to gain understanding into the perceptions and expectations of African American female doctoral students enrolled in an HRD program at a PWI who engage in mentoring relationships with faculty. As an African American woman in an HRD doctoral program, mentoring was extremely important to me, thus not having a mentor at times impeded my progress throughout the program. The goal of this study was to offer a better understanding of the dynamics of faculty to student mentoring relationships.

I assumed that these African American women had better mentoring experiences than I had, but I was incorrect. These women did not have a mentor and at times struggled through the program. They struggled with issues of loneliness, isolation, being disconnected and not value just as I had experienced. Each woman had a very unique and detail account of their experiences. There were those who were concerned that I would not be able to remove myself from the study because I was "seen" as one of the participants. However, I was able to separate myself from the study because the uniqueness of each story allowed me to capture the true essence of their experiences. Some of the women shared more than others and some at times was unable to share parts of their story because they become very emotional. Their emotions stemmed from the frustration that they did not receive mentor or the "proper mentoring" that they should have. As Howard-Hamilton phrased it as the "outsider within" status, which these

African American women were invited in to places where the dominant group (PWI) was assembled, but these women remained outsiders because they were invisible and had no voice.

I often wonder if the experiences would have been different if these women had the opportunity to develop a mentoring relationship with faculty. The mentoring that these women received were both from their family and friends, and very seldom from faculty. The mentoring that the women received from faculty was very limited and could be categorized as basic information that each student receives.

For instance, the women explain that once they were admitted to the program, they navigated throughout the program on their own. At times they would receive some help from friends who were enrolled in the program, but majority of the time they were on their own. She explained the help she received from her friends was only informational because they were only students, not advisors. After being accepted in to the program, Ellis mentioned that her mother as was her support during the early part of her academic career but she didn't rely on her mother most of time. She relied on herself as her support system. Felisha a non-traditional student who decided to return back to college to pursue her doctoral degree indicated that the decision to return was daunting but she was encouraged to apply to the program by her husband and family and upon entering the program received support from her academic advisor. Charley and Paige relied on the assistance of her peers and friends enrolled in the program for help. Charley stated that, "we're HRD, we're about adults learning and adults being productive and helping people but we're not doing that in our own program".

Earline described her first experiences in the program as a culture shock. Howard-Hamilton (2003) explained it has the "outsider within" status… A sense of belonging can never exist because there is no cultural or personal fit between the experiences of African American woman and the dominant group (p. 21). She was also frustrated because she did not receive any support or guidance from faculty or staff, nor the students who were already enrolled in the program. She mentioned that there "should've been some assistance given by the students who were already in the program." Creighton, Creighton, and Parks (2010) expressed that faculty members can practice effective mentoring by providing "early and ongoing opportunities for doctoral students" (p.45).

The study also suggests that the roles of mentor versus advisor are similar. The use of the multicultural feminist mentoring model was helpful (Benishek, Bieschke, Park, & Slattery, 2004). The participants agreed that the roles between the two were similar. Both roles advocate on behalf of the student, presenting the voice of the advisor and mentor concerning the components that make up traditional mentoring. Within the context of higher education, (Schlosser & Gelso, 2001; Holba, 2012) view mentor and advisor interchangeable; their role is to help students develop the skills needed to be successful.

Throughout the study the participants pointed out that as African American or Black woman enrolled in an HRD program at a PWI, having a faculty member of color was important. Having a person of color and support from someone that is similar to them was important. Patton and Harper (2003) support this idea of having someone who

resembles the African American woman would "be a rich and unique experience" (p. 71). The participants also stated "any disenfranchised group needs mentors. Our struggles would be similar." The findings from this study indicated that it is important to establish a mentoring relationship with faculty members was very important in the lives of these African American women. It's noted that it takes time to develop the relationship based on "mutual knowledge and trust, cultural sensitivity and awareness, accountability, collaboration and cooperation" (Farmer, Jackson, Camacho, & Hall, 2007, p.96). In order to meet the diverse needs of African American women, creating a culturally responsive environment is important is critical. It has been noted by various authors the significance of a faculty members place in the social order and the affects of their beliefs, attitudes, and assumptions about specific groups (LeRoux, 2001; Villegas & Lucas, 2007).

The benefits the mentee receives from the mentor were identified as: immeasurable amounts of resources, support, guidance, gaining a friend and some to seek advice from. The benefits with regard to the mentor were intangible benefits. The benefits were identified as a sense of accomplishment, satisfaction and enhancing their skills. For instance, Paige expressed that "knowing that you helped someone succeed in life" is a fulfilling and comforting knowing that you contributed to his or her success." Benishek, Bieschke, Park, and Slattery (2004) multicultural feminist mentoring model outline the benefits to a mentor and mentee, which the participants expressed in the study. , "to be a part of the creation of anything that is successful is rewarding," but it also allows the mentor to reflect on their choices and recommendations given to the

mentee. Charley explained it as the mentor, "discovering different facets of their own personality and acknowledging that they were not aware existed before."

Challenges derived from those interviews included (a) navigated program alone, (b) sought out mentor, (c) maintaining a relationship with mentor, and (d) being valued as an African American woman. The presences of a mentor for African American female students helped neutralize the conflicts these women faced. Earline faced feelings of isolation and loneliness. She stepped into a new culture that was unfamiliar and foreign. According to (Bell, 1990; Blake, 1999), for Black women in particular, a good mentor is critical to helping navigate challenges regarding prejudices and stereotypical images, racism, sexism, and stresses of being bicultural.

The six African American women in this study had internal motivation and support from their family and friends but agreed that mentoring from faculty within their department and their program was an important factor towards the success of completing the program. For instance, Earline faced feelings of isolation and loneliness. She stepped into a new culture that was unfamiliar and foreign. She explained that it was difficult as a Black woman to connect with anyone. She felt that when she arrived on campus, "there was nobody." No one was willing to take her under his or her wing and mentor her. The findings indicated that either the faculty member was not willing to mentor the students or had other responsibilities that didn't allow him or her to mentor these women.

Charley sated that she had received help from professors before but she had to approach them and ask questions. “I think a mentor is proactive, and I’ve never had any (faculty) to proactively reach out to me”.

Outreach towards the students in the department was also a factor that resonated with the participants. The absence of a mentor decreased the morale and motivation of the women. Felisha stated that it delayed her progress, “delayed me reaching critical milestones and benchmarks”. If a mentor were present, those milestones and benchmarks would have been met because of the support she would have received from her mentor. Those milestones and benchmarks included support for exams (preliminary and proposal), choosing courses that are relevant to the success of them completing the program, and research and conference opportunities.

The participants sought out or reached out to their mentors because they did not receive an invitation from the faculty members to become their mentee. The feeling of isolation was explained as “stumbling in the dark, blind, with little or not guidance. My sheer determination, resilience, and having so many other African American or minority students, male and female, experiencing the same thing, we have worked collectively to kind of piecemeal things together and provide support. But since we don’t have any expertise…we’re not necessarily qualified to be one another’s mentor”. According to Roberts and Plakhotnik (2009), the support systems mentors can offer in higher education help build the social capital in higher education. This participants’ illustration of seeking out a mentor, rejection and isolation was extremely powerful explanation of the effects that an African American woman face due to the absence of mentor. Earline

indicated that she learned how to "access resources, leverage resources and built her own system". People helped her along the way but she created her own survival skills "because otherwise, if I didn't have that, I probably would not be here today".

Maintaining a relationship with faculty for some would end upon graduation because mentoring relationship was never established, while others would like to maintain the relationship for article publishing. The seminal works by Kram (1983) indicate the mentoring relationship has phases, which in the case of the participants is the separation phase. This relationship is either altered by structural changes in the organizational context or psychological changes between both individuals. In this case, the women in this study did not have an emotional bond with faculty.

Lastly, being valued as an African American woman was a critical challenge these women faced. Some of the women were unable to answer the question, but one of the women gave a powerful explanation of reasoning that the department and faculty did not value these women as African American women. Felisha stated, "If they have little or no power, and they don't feel valued, I don't understand how they can help guide me to reaching empowerment." However, others indicated that if they had the option to chose someone as a mentor, they would have liked to choose a White male in the department because, "He is very much into diversity and cultures and race and other people… I've never seen race being an issue for him". Paige summed it up, "Value me first as a person and what I can contribute, but see past my color and see past me as a woman".

As HRD scholars, we know that mentoring has been noted as an effective tool for career planning, change management and building social capital. Mentoring programs in most organizations are mostly unmanaged; as a result they are not understood, measured or evaluated (Allenman & Clarke, 2000). These programs that are not well managed will lead to dysfunctional relationships between the employees and their supervisors, creating frustration and distrust within the organization (Ragins & Cotton, 1999; Scandura, 1998). This same concept can be applied to academia; if mentoring is unmanaged the relationships between faculty and students will become dysfunctional. It is important to note that HRD is based on several theories, which include, economic, systems and psychological theories with ethics as lying underneath the stool.

The three theories are based on Swanson and Holton III (2001) three-legged stool as a theoretical foundation for HRD. Economic theory includes human capital theory, "which learning is received from training, and education and training increases learning and leads to increased performance, productivity, wages, and corporate earnings (Cole, McArdle, & Clements, 2005, p. 436). Psychological theory often provides a foundation for the process of learning and how it can be applied within everyday living. According to Bandura (1973), social learning theory emphasizes the importance of observation of people, interaction within the environment, and the imitation of observes behaviors. As stated previously, systems theory supports the need to view organizations from a holistic perspective and to acknowledge the interconnectedness of organizational performance, economic gain, social networks and social networks an social needs of people within organizations (Brooks & Nafukho, 2006, p. 119).

Recommendations for Practice

While the purpose of this study was to gain a better insight into the perceptions and experiences of African American women doctoral students enrolled in an HRD program at a PWI who engage in mentoring relationships with faculty, recommendations for practice related to this study emerged.

As stated in Chapter 1, "HRD is about human beings functioning in a productive system…it is a process of developing and unleashing expertise for the purpose of improving individual, team, work process, and organizational system performance" (Swanson & Holton III, 2009, p. 4). As we know mentoring is an intense, relationship between an experienced, senior person who provides support to a less experienced individual (Noe, Greenberger, & Wang, 2002). Mentoring has been perceived as an advantage and benefit for students in higher education. The data from this study outlined the challenges and disadvantages the African American female students enrolled in a HRD doctoral program faced. It is imperative that we, as academic scholars continue to seek out mentoring programs that will meet the needs of these women. Blackwell (1983) conducted a study and found that 87% of African American professionals did not have a mentor while enrolled in graduate/professional school. According to (Kram, 1983; Merriam & Cafarella, 1999, Davison & Foster-Johnson, 2001; Hezlett & Gibson, 2005), mentoring has been noted as an essential tool for facilitating learning in our society. Understanding the pathway African American women took towards the completion of their PhD program will inform conversation and contribute to the scholarship of mentoring particularly in HRD.

In order to bridge the gap for African American female students in higher education and HRD, we must first understand their perspective and create solutions to fix the concerns or problems. As HRD scholars, understanding how diversity affects the mentoring relationship would allow HRD scholars the opportunity to effectively use mentoring as a tool to for these students.

African American Faculty Support and Presence

Repeatedly, expressed throughout the study was the need for more faculty support, particularly African American support. The first recommendation is the department must first increase the number of African American faculty members and understand the value these faculty members bring to the department. Sedlacek, Benjamin, Schlosser, & Sheu stated (as cited in Allen & Eby, 2007), "As the enrollment of African American female students increase, the ability to achieve same-group mentoring has decreased" (p. 269). The availability of African American faculty will help facilitate academic success for these students.

For African American female doctoral students it has been noted the difficulty of locating suitable mentors to build mentoring relationships with. According to (Hall & Sandler, 1983; Schlosser & Foley, 2008) indicated that women students and other nontraditional students are in need of mentoring but least likely to seek out or find a mentor because of their status as an outsider looking in. Creating mentoring relationships with those who are "like them" allows them mentees or protégés receive more psychosocial mentoring which (Harris, 1999) indicated is important for a woman of color. The six women in this study repeatedly expressed the need for an African

Woman faculty member but instead they were left to choose an indiviudal who did not identify as an African American woman. For instance, Charley stated that:

> Well of course the benefit of having a white faculty mentor is that you get that white privilege to rub off a little bit on you because they get more doors opened, they get more things done… And so if I had that like association with a white man, I'm sure lots of doors would be open for me. Just by the association… I think sometimes they take for granted the privilege that is associated with being white. And because they take that for granted, they think that either we are just complaining about the injustice, that they just still don't see that's inherent in any type of institutional program. Or they don't recognize that it's still there. Because I think everybody likes to think that it's gone, but it's just not gone.

Earline and Kelly on the other hand felt that the benefit of having a mentor that isn't an African American woman but having multiple mentors from various backgrounds "is like pulling pieces from different people". Kelly stated that "we've been taught that the white male is at the very top of he pyramid, so having a white male perspective has honestly gotten me to look at things differently…they showed me that you have to loo out for yourself". These women either had to navigate the pipeline along without the assistance of a mentor or they had to resort to choosing a mentor that was indifferent of them. Cultural responsiveness must exist in the department and program in order for African American women to succeed. These women learned to adept and continued to progress through the program, with or without a mentor.

Formal Mentoring Programs

Another recommendation is to create a formal mentoring program for all doctoral students. Mentoring should exist not only within the departments but institutionalized. Mentoring should become an expectation for every faculty member. The expectation should be that every department view mentoring in the same lens as they view teaching and research. The institution should be aware of the impact of mentoring not only for African American female students but also for all students.

There has been research conducting towards understanding formal mentoring relationships, thus research has proven that these relationships can be beneficial because they are organized and intentional towards reaching the goal of the student and the university/department. Through the use of formal mentoring programs, departments can address the issues of power, race, class and gender through training sessions geared towards helping mentors understand the developmental help and support needed when forming these relationships. Hansman (2002) indicated "If informal mentoring relationships are unavailable to members of historically marginalized groups, then they must have the opportunity to participate in formal mentoring organized by work organizations or educational institutions (p. 39). The women in this study indicated that they were never sought to engage in mentoring relationships. They also stated that they would reach out to faculty but were never acknowledged. Academic achievement and persistence within the program are negative factors that can affect African American female students. The women in my study were not given the option or the chance to develop a relationship, which halted some academic success in the program.

Some academic institutions have formal or structural relationships between their students and faculty members. Such as the University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign and Claremont Graduate University. This was not the case for the participants in my study. The relationships formed with the faculty members were informal relationships that failed. The creation of a formal mentoring program will also send students the message that faculty members and departments care about their success in the program. The program will also allow faculty members the chance to provide coaching and support to students and the opportunity for students to increase their self-confidence, development of professional relationships and research opportunities and experience.

The academic community we, especially those in HRD, should also note from recent research that these formal mentoring programs differ in design, nature and outcomes and focus. Jacobi (1991) indicated that some programs assign mentors to mentees, while others allow the mentee to select the mentor. Evidence has shown that voluntary participation does increase participant satisfaction (Ragins, Cotton & Miller, 2000), but the choice to participate should still lie in the hands of the mentor and mentee. Some programs train mentors while others don't. Choosing the location and frequency of the program also differ; some programs designate the location and frequency of meetings, where others have the choice to choose when and where to meet.

As noted in the study, the six African American women perception was that faculty members were not open to establishing relationships with them. Faculty members told the women that they were too busy or had other responsibilities and was unable to mentor them. Other strategies that organizations (academic departments) can

utilize to recruit more faculty that are willing to mentor is "to allocate more attention and resources to the science and practice of mentoring by establishing awards for outstanding mentors…and recognizing the doctoral programs that distinguish themselves by fostering mentorships" (Johnson, 2002, p. 91). The departments can also create practice guidelines for faculty members who choose to mentor. In addition, Johnson's (2002) also recommends that departments provide guidelines that will help facilitate the relationship by providing strategic practice recommendations and ethical guidelines for forming, structuring, and managing mentorships. For instance the institution that I attended provided opportunities and funding for students to attend research conferences. In 2013, over 60 students attended research conferences within the U.S. and outside of the U.S. The department also has a graduate student group that hosts various graduate workshops and provided travel funding to over 25 students during the 2011-2012 academic year. The same opportunities would be beneficial to the six African American women in this study at Southeast University.

When forming a formal mentoring program, it should be designed with special goals in mind. These goals should be linked with the organizations strategic objectives (Kram & Bragar, 1992) and goals. Burke and McKeen (1989) state that forming a formal mentoring program "involves setting explicit goals and practices for linking less experienced and more experienced managers, and encouraging mentoring by arranging relationships that serve developmental purposes for both individuals (p. 76). Boyle and Boice (1998) created a model of systematic mentoring that can be utilized at institutions.

This model was developed for new faculty members and graduate teaching assistants, but it can also be utilize for various student-faculty mentorships.

The model developed by Boyle and Boyce (1998) has three phases that include planning, structure and assessment. During the first phase, planning it is important that the faculty members and students are recruited early to participate in the formal mentoring program. The selection of mentors is an important aspect of any mentoring program because it impacts the effectiveness of the relationship (McDonlad & Hite, 2005). Recruitment of mentors should be deliberate and intentional, choosing those with positive personal characteristics such warmth, empathy, integrity and honesty. The mentors should also possess positive behavioral characteristics such as effective communication, availability and respect among colleagues.

Van Emmerik, Baugh, and Euwema (2005) noted that it is "critical to define a profile and criteria for desirable mentors" (p. 319). Being deliberate and intentional in the selection of mentors and establishing criteria will help in avoiding some of the pitfalls associated with negative, unrealistic expectations. According to Campbell (2007), "not all faculty members make good mentors. Those that have the requisite interest, demeanor, and interpersonal skill to facilitate development in another person should be encouraged to mentor students" (p. 334). The matching mentors and mentees is extremely important, "as poor mentoring my result in dysfunctional or failed relationships (Baugh & Fagenson-Eland, 2007, p. 261). In academia, experienced faculty members would be linked up with students (mentees) within the department.

The second phase of the program is structure. During this time, mentors and mentee were required to meet on a regular basis, either briefly or for an extended time period. They also had regular contact with the program directors to assure that the mentors and protégés were meeting as expected.

Finally, the third phase of the program was assessment. As HRD scholars and practitioners, it is important to evaluate the program. This allows the department the opportunity to make any changes and/or adjustments to the program as needed. It also allows the participants (faculty and students) the opportunity to review the success or failure of the program implemented. Boyle and Boice (1998) evaluated their program by collecting data from three areas. Those included, program involvement data, pair bonding data, and mentoring context data. The program involvement data included tracking the regularity and frequency of the mentor-protégé meetings. The pair bonding data included data on the 10-item mentoring index. This information was important for the department because it allowed them the opportunity to compare the bonds between the mentor and the mentee. The mentoring context data included the records of the mentee-protégé meetings.

Also, as an HRD scholar I would recommend creating an evaluation to be given to the faculty members and students involved in the mentoring relationships. These evaluations should be given at the mid-point of the semester, at the end of the semester and when the students graduates. Collecting data from each of these different moments will allow the department to assess the vitality of the program. In addition to the model created by (Boyle and Boyce, 1998), utilizing the ADDIE model along with the three

theories listed above; economic, psychological, and systems theory, will help strengthen mentoring programs use of HRD functions. The basis of the ADDIE model includes; analysis, design, development, implementation and evaluation. According to (Moskowitz ,2008; Noe, 2010), during the analysis stage desired outcomes are determined, task inventory is completed and identification of performance deficiencies, and targeted task to improve. During the design stage the learning objectives are established, identify learning steps for each task and creation of a performance test. The development stage entails the list of activities to learn the tasks, review of any existing mentoring material, development of instructional material, and synthesizing material into a learning program. Implementation includes creating a management plans for conducting training; preparation before training takes place, and conducting the training. Finally, the last stage of evaluation includes evaluating the learners in their working environment, revise training system, and review and evaluate the ADDIE process used for the organization.

Recommendations for Future Research

As noted, mentoring is an important factor for African American female doctoral students enrolled in HRD programs at PWI's. Recommendations for future research include a qualitative comparative study that includes other graduate students enrolled in the HRD program at Southeast University. This study would compare the mentoring relationships with faculty for other graduate students such as Asian or Latino/a students enrolled at Southeast University and the African American female students included in this study. Did these students receive more or better mentoring opportunities than the six

African American female doctoral students in this study? What were the mentoring experiences these students had for their faculty members? What are their experiences with mentoring?

Another recommendation for future research is to compare the mentoring experiences of graduate males or African American male graduate students who received mentoring versus those of six African American female students in this study utilizing qualitative research. Are the mentoring experiences similar or different? Do these men receive more or better mentoring than African American female graduate students?

A final recommendation for future research would be to look at the mentoring experiences for African American faculty members. Throughout the study, some of the individuals voiced their concerns that African American faculty members are not valued. Their assumption was that African American faculty members are not valued so how can they help their students feel valued and empowered. Do African American faculty members feel valued or empowered by the department? Also, are there any mentoring benefits these African American faculty members received from mentoring students?

Limitations

Being an African American woman in an HRD doctoral program at a PWI, there were many potential limitations. When I first mentioned this study to my chair, she was hesitant to agree and allow me to proceed with the study because of my biases that existed. I am glad that she was opened up and allowed me to follow through with the study. Although, at times it was some of the questions were difficult for some of the women to answer, overall I was able to obtain rich data that reveled the essence of their

experiences.

Being aware of these limitations, I made sure to take extra caution I making sure that the participants were comfortable with participating in the study. I also made sure that I was prepared and aware of the time that was set aside for the interviews. I must say, the women were not concerned with the time; they were excited that they finally had a chance to tell their story. I was excited that I was given the opportunity to allow these women to tell their stories. I felt that my time with these women was positive. The time spent with these women and their willingness to share their time and experiences with me was incredible.

The African American women and their experiences also limited the study. I could only report the experiences shared by these women and what I understood from their experiences as it relates their perceptions and expectations these women had concerning their mentoring relationships with faculty.

Conclusion

Overall, the implication is that mentoring is important in the lives of these African American woman doctoral students enrolled in HRD programs at PWI's. The creating of informal relationships has been formed but commitment and dedication towards the relationship is equally important. The relationships were established during the infancy stage of their program but as they progressed, the commitment from the faculty member diminished.

As noted in the literature, studies have shown mentoring to be a critical factor in doctoral student success generally (Faison, 1996; Patton & Harper, 2003; Williams-

Nickelson, 2009), but also in particular for African American women (Grant, et. al 1993; Hall & Sandler, 1983; Welch, 1990), but the literature does expound on what resources have been put in place to assist African American women doctoral students in HRD programs at PWI. Indicated in Chapter I, the HRD field is growing and alongside the increase in African American women enrolling into these doctoral programs. It is the responsibility of the university and their departments to aid these students towards completing their goal of finishing their journey—doctoral journey. The forming of formal mentoring programs would be beneficial towards obtaining the goal of finishing their doctoral program. They would gain a sense of belongingness, and a support system, which would impact the success of these groups of women. The literature does not account for the ways to create formal mentoring programs within these HRD departments. From this study, it is apparent that the department has not shown an explicit commitment to mentoring these women. The department is not in this game alone, the university and the departments must work as a collaborative team to create a formal mentoring program that is structured for the success of these groups of women. This is not an issue an HRD issue but an issue that higher education has dealt with as a whole. As HRD scholars and practitioners, we must use the resources and tools that we have built and take charge in helping our students succeed. Understanding the role of mentoring will permit HRD scholars and professionals the tools needed to identify and train successful mentors (Wanberg, Welsh, & Hezlett, 2003). It will be very beneficial for all—students, faculty and the university.

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APPENDIX A

DOCTORAL DEGREES CONFERED, 2008-2009

Level of degree and race/ethnicity	Number of degrees conferred	Percentage of degrees conferred	Number of degrees conferred for females	Percentage of conferred to females
Total	67,716	100%	35,437	100%
White	39,648	58.6%	22,554	63.6%
Black	4,434	6.5%	2,950	8.3%
Hispanic	2,540	3.8%	1,448	4.1%
Asian/Pacific Islander	3,875	5.7%	2,105	5.9%
American Indian/Alaska Native	332	0.5%	194	0.5%
Nonresident alien	16,887	24.9%	6,186	17.5%

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), U.S. Department of Education (2011).

APPENDIX B

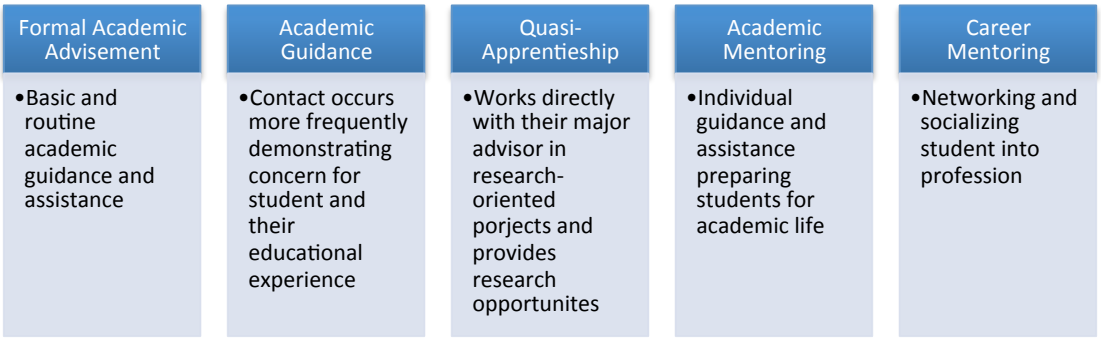
MULTICULTURAL FEMINIST MENTORING MODEL

Characteristics	Benefits to Mentor	Benefits to Mentee
Rethinking of Power Eschews hierarchies, emphasis on sharing power Puts own needs secondary to mentee	Gains colleague	Feels competent Learns to trust Respect self
Emphasis on Relational Mentoring genuine Mentoring is both task and relationship oriented Mentor shows both strengths and flaws Feedback occurs within the relationship	Gains support, Friendship Understanding of multicultural issues	Gains support, Gains appreciation of balance Develops networks
Valuing Collaboration Mentor and mentee work side by side All voices are valued Participation is not prescribed by	Valuable task assistance, Increases productivity, Higher quality products	Gains direct experience, Observes close model, Contributions respected

majority culture Diverse perspectives are encouraged		
Integration of Dichotomies Focus on developing a congruent sense of self Both sides of the continuum are valued Experiences gained in a non-majority culture are perceived as valuable	Reinforces self-congruence	Respects knowledge, Respects feelings, Develops self-congruence
Incorporation of Political Analysis Acknowledgement that education/science/work/life are not value free Mainstreams values within both individuals and institutions are challenged	Influences status quo	Is empowered to work toward social change
Commitment to Diversity		

APPENDIX C

HOLLAND'S FACULTY-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP TYPES



APPENDIX D

RECRUITMENT LETTER

Dear Prospective Participant:

I am a doctoral student in the Department of Education and Human Development at Texas A&M University conducting research under the supervision of Dr. Terah Venzant-Chambers on does mentoring matter in HRD, the perceptions of African American women doctoral students. In an effort to better understand the dynamics of faculty to student mentoring relationships, the purpose of this study is to gain insight into the perceptions and expectations of African American women doctoral students enrolled in an HRD program at a PWI who engage in mentoring relationships with faculty.

I plan to conduct this research by interviewing African American women doctoral students in the location of the participants' choosing. Your involvement in this study is entirely voluntary and there are no known or anticipated risks to participation in this study. If you agree to participate, there will be two interviews. The first interview would be one-on-one anticipated to last 60-120 minutes. The questions are very general, (for example, As an African American woman enrolled in Ph.D. program, what has been your experience?). However, you may decline answering any questions you feel you do not wish to answer. The second interview will be a group interview with all the participants in this study to inquire a deeper understanding of the specific experiences the group may or may not have experienced as a group. I anticipate the focus group interview to last no more than 2-3 hours. All information will be considered confidential and no identifiers linking you to this study will be included in any sort of report, thesis

or publication that may be published. Research records will be stored securely and only Rhonda M. Fowler will have access to the records.

Upon receiving this letter you are interested in participating or would like additional information, please feel free to contact myself, Rhonda M. Fowler at 936-465-1394 or rfowler@tamu.edu.

Please be assured that this study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Office of Texas A&M Human Subjects Protection Program at Texas A&M University. However, the final decision to participate in the study is yours. If you have any comments or concerns resulting from your participation in this study, please contact the Texas A&M Human Subjects Protection Program office at (979) 458-4068 or email at irb@tamu.edu.

Thank you for your interest in this project!

Rhonda M. Fowler

APPENDIX E

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY CONSENT FORM

You are invited to take part in a research study being conducted by Rhonda M. Fowler, a researcher from Texas A&M University. The information in this form is provided to help you decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to take part in the study, you will be asked to sign this consent form. If you decide you do not want to participate, there will be no penalty to you, and you will not lose any benefits you normally would have.

Why Is This Study Being Done?

The purpose of this study is to gain insight into the perceptions and expectations of African American women doctoral students enrolled in an HRD program at a PWI who engage in mentoring relationships with faculty.

Why Am I Being Asked To Be In This Study?

You are being asked to be in this study because you identify as African American and enrolled in HRD doctoral program at a PWI.

How Many People Will Be Asked To Be In This Study?

Six to eight people will be enrolled in this study.

What Are the Alternatives to being in this study?

The alternative to being in the study is not to participate.

What Will I Be Asked To Do In This Study?

You will be asked to be interviewed to discuss your mentoring experiences as an African American woman enrolled in an HRD doctoral program at a PWI. Your participation in this study will last up to up 60-120 minutes for the one-on-one initial interview and no more than 2-3 hours for the focus group. You will also receive a copy of the interview transcript after the interview is conducted. The researcher will follow-up with you either phone call or email at a later date asking for any feedback or clarification questions.

Will Photos, Video or Audio Recordings Be Made Of Me during the Study?

Audio recorder will be used during the study so that the interviews can be transcribed. If you do not give permission for the audio recording of the interview, you cannot participate in the study.

Version Date: 06/13/2012 Page 1 of 3
Texas A&M University IRB Approval From: 07/26/12 To: 07/15/13
IRB Protocol # 2012-0431 Authorized by: KR

Are There Any Risks To Me?
The things that you will be doing are no more/greater than risks than you would come across in everyday life. Although the researchers have tried to avoid risks, you may feel that some questions/procedures that are asked of you will be stressful or upsetting. You do not have to answer anything you do not want to.

Are There Any Benefits To Me?
There is no direct benefit to you by being in this study. What the researchers will find out from this study may help other African American women doctoral students enrolled in doctoral HRD programs.

Will There Be Any Costs To Me?
Aside from your time, there are some/no costs for taking part in the study.

Will I Be Paid To Be In This Study?
You will not be paid for being in this study.

Will Information From This Study Be Kept Private?
The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking you to this study will be included in any sort of report that might be published. Research records will be stored securely and only Rhonda M. Fowler will have access to the records. Your information will be stored in locked file cabinet; computer files protected with a password. This consent form will be filed securely in an official area.
Information about you and related to this study will be kept confidential to the extent permitted or required by law.

Who may I Contact for More Information?
You may contact Co-Investigator, Rhonda M. Fowler, to tell her about a concern or complaint about this research at 936-465-1394 or rfowler@tamu.edu. You may also contact the Co-Investigator's advisor Dr. Terah Venzant-Chambers at 979-845-2716 or email address at tvenzant@tamu.edu. For questions about your rights as a research participant; or if you have questions, complaints, or concerns about the research, you may call the Texas A&M University Human Subjects Protection Program office at (979) 458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu.

What if I Change My Mind About Participating?
This research is voluntary and you have the choice whether or not to be in this research study. You may decide to not begin or to stop participating at any time. If you choose not to be in this study or stop being in the study, there will be no effect to you.

STATEMENT OF CONSENT
I agree to be in this study and know that I am not giving up any legal rights by signing this form. The procedures, risks, and benefits have been explained to me, and my questions have been answered. I know that new information about this research study will be provided to me as it becomes available and that the researcher will tell me if I must be removed from the study. I can ask more questions if I want. A copy of this entire consent form will be given to me.

_____
_____
Participant's Signature Date

_____
_____
Printed Name Date

INVESTIGATOR'S AFFIDAVIT:
Either I have or my agent has carefully explained to the participant the nature of the above project. I hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge the person who signed this consent form was informed of the nature, demands, benefits, and risks involved in his/her participation.

_____
_____
Signature of Presenter Date

_____
_____
Printed Name Date

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Introductory Questions:

1. Tell me how you got to be where you are.
    a. If necessary, probe about first experiences in graduate school.
2. Who were the people that helped you along your educational journey?
    a. If necessary, ask if there were important people who helped during your enrollment in this program?

Defining Mentoring

3. How would you define the term mentor?
4. Is your definition for "advisor" different from "mentor"? How so?
5. As you consider your definition of the term "mentor," in what ways do the people you've mentioned already meet or not meet that definition?
6. As you think about your definition for what a mentor is, are there other people who you consider mentors?
7. What characteristics do you look for in a mentor?
    a. Can you/Do you have more than one mentor?
    b. If necessary, ask what the benefit of having multiple mentors would be.
8. What are the benefits of having a mentor?
9. What are the benefits to the mentor?

Characteristics of Mentoring at Institution

10. To your knowledge, does your program have a formal mentoring program?
11. Do you have a faculty mentor?
    a. If necessary, ask whether this person in your program? Do you have a faculty mentor outside of your program?
12. When did you first come in contact with your mentor(s) as a graduate student?
13. How did you meet your mentor? Was this person assigned to you or who actually took the first step in establishing the relationship? Would you have chosen someone else?
14. If you had a mentor(s), have you changed or considered changing your mentor while at this institution? Why?
15. How often do you meet with your mentor(s) or how accessible is your mentor(s)?
16. How well is this institution meeting your mentoring needs as an African American woman HRD doctoral student?
17. How well is your department meeting your mentoring needs as an African American woman doctoral student in an HRD program?

18. Do you believe it is important for African American women doctoral students enrolled in HRD programs at PWI's to have mentors? Why or why not?
19. After graduation, do you expect the mentoring relationship between you and your mentor to continue? Why or why not?

Impact of Mentoring on Personal Success:

20. How has having/not having a mentor impacted your success during this program?
21. What expectations do you think your mentor has of you?
22. What expectations do you have of your mentor?
23. Does your mentor help you overcome obstacles/barriers in the academic climate?

Characteristics of the Faculty Mentoring Relationship

24. Do you have an African American faculty mentor? Do you have a faculty mentor who is of color?
    a. Is having an African American faculty mentor, or mentor of color, important to you?
25. What are the challenges and benefits of having a white faculty mentor?
26. What role do power dynamics play in your mentoring relationship?
27. How would you characterize the mentoring relationship you have with your primary faculty mentor?
28. Would you consider your mentoring relationship to be collaborative? Why or why not?
29. Do you perceive your faculty mentor to value who you are as an African American women? Why or why not?
30. Is your mentor committed to diversity? How so?
31. To what degree do you consider your mentoring relationship to be empowering?
32. What is most meaningful to you in the mentoring relationship? Why?
33. Is there anything else about your mentoring relationship that you feel it is important to discuss at this time?

APPENDIX G

SAMPLE OF INTERVIEW

Rhonda: Do you think that it's important to have an African American faculty mentor or mentor of color?

Felisha: I think my preference would probably be an African American mentor, only because they have shared experiences, you know, having to deal with RM and bigotry and discrimination and things like that, which I think still occur at the university level.

But you know, at this point in my program, I would take anybody, you know. I think my preference would be an African American female. I think if I couldn't get an African American woman, I would move to another minority male. And if I couldn't get one of those at that point, you know, I would probably take a white male. My experience has been that white females have been very . . . I don't know, standoffish, territorial, catty. And so they would be my least preferred mentor.

Rhonda: So when you mentioned that you would take any one, can you tell me why you said that you would take any one at this stage in the program that you're in, why you said that?

Felisha: Well, I would because, you know, having been in a program now and realizing that there are things that I could've accomplished so much faster and so much better, had I had a mentor. I don't want to continue to stumble along and just find myself arriving at graduation. I want to have a mentor who helps me make choices in moving the direction towards graduation, in a way that I haven't experienced with college, that is going to be of value, not just okay, I finally stumbled through this and I got my degree, you know.

APPENDIX H

SAMPLE OF REFLECTIVE JOURNAL

Today I conducted my first interview with Ellis. During the interview there were times when she it felt as if she was reflecting on my experiences and not her experiences. It was difficult at times not to interject my biases during the interview. For instance, during the interview she stated "I wish that . . . and this is just from my perspective being here in this program, I wish that there was more of a concerted effort in mentoring the students of color here, because I feel like . . . it might just be me – nobody has ever said "let's do this together" or "how are you doing here" or "what are your plans". When she mentioned that, I wanted to interject and tell her that's exactly how I have felt this entire time throughout this program. I had to refrain from saying that because I didn't want past experiences and biases to have an affect on the study. I didn't realize how hard it would be to step back and just be the researcher and not one of "them" (being one of the participants). August 7. 2012

I am now into my 3th interview with Earline. This journey with these women has been a journey I thoroughly enjoyed because they have allowed me to see in their world as they see it. During my interview with Charley, she really spoke profoundly about being on the outside and looking in as Howard-Hamilton explains it. I am glad to know that my idea of using the Black feminist thought as part of my theoretical framework was a good idea. Collins really brings it home when she stated that, "Black women possess a unique standpoint, or perspective, of their own experiences an there will be certain

commonalities". I agree with her, this is true. Even though each of the participants that I have interviewed so far has different experiences as doctoral students in the HRD program, there are definitely some similarities between these women. August 9, 2012